THE Excellent WOMAN:

Discoursed more privately from *Proverbs* 31. 29, 30, 31.

Upon occasion of the Death OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE, The Lady *FRANCES HOBART*.

By *J. C.* D. D.

Collinges, John

Connexa sunt timor, & Religio, nec manere potest altera sine altero. Bernardus.

LONDON,
Printed in the Year 1669.

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TO THE
Right Honourable,
THE
Lady ELIZABETH COUNTESSE,
Dowager of *Exeter.*

Madam,

That noble perſon (to whoſe memory theſe ſheets are devoted) and my relation to her, were ſo well known to your Ladiſhip, *that I am ſure you will find no difficulty to conclude that ſomething of this nature is but a debt to her memory, and eſpecially from my ſelf, upon whom ſhe laid ſo many obligations, that if I ſhould* hold my peace, *the* very ſtones would ſpeak: *Nor* Madam, *can I think diſcourſes of this nature uſeleſs, being, though of no ſignificancy,* in ſubſidia mortuorum, *to advantage the dead; yet not inſignificant both* in ſolatium, *and* ad exemplum vivorum, *for the*

comfort and example of those who are alive, that others may learn the steps of holiness, by which she ascended that blessed Mansion into which we believe her entred, and by which she mounted to that pinacle of honour *in the* Church *of God, upon which we lately saw her, and which her* memory *yet possesseth. This* (Madam) *being determined, I had no difficulty to find out to whom I should inscribe them. Both the* subject matter *of the discourses, and your* Ladiship's *near relation to her* Ladiship *challenged that at my hands. The design of the sheets* (Madam) *introductive to the sequent* Narrative *of her* Ladiship's *life, is to evince a great truth to the world, concerning which the practical errours, which we daily see in it, give us reason to believe it not sufficiently perswaded,* viz. That the person fearing the Lord is the most excellent person. *Were the world better convinced of this most demonstrable Proposition, those persons would not find it so difficult to reconcile the world unto them, and to gain a quiet room, in the latitude of it, wherein to* pass the time of their sojourning here with fear; *only leading such a conver-*

sation

ſation, as might compert with the fear of God, *according to the degrees of light they have received. Thoſe* Madam, *who know the value of perſons* fearing Jehovah, *muſt from principles of reaſon have a kindneſs for every one whom they ſee afraid to ſin againſt that* great and glorious Name, *though that* timoration *makes them recede from them in ſome practices, wherein they could deſire them to be like themſelves. But* Madam, *how unreaſonable ſoever the more peeviſh world ſheweth it ſelf in their judgement of, and behaviour to ſuch perſons. Your* Ladiſhip *hath for many years declared your ſelf to have a juſter apprehenſion, and teſtified it both by your own choice of the* right waies of the Lord, *and your exemplary kindneſs to thoſe whom you have found walking therein. Theſe Papers,* Madam, *will juſtifie your* Ladyſhip's *judgement, and may poſſibly help to confirm what your* Honour *hath ſo long believed.*

To the latter part of theſe ſheets your Ladiſhip *is entituled by your near relation to that* Honourable perſon *whom they concern, and the intireneſs of affection, which you mutually bare*

each to other. She seldom mentioned your Ladiſhip in your abſence; but the form of her mention was, My dear Siſter of Exeter. With your Ladiſhip it was that ſhe conſulted in her difficulties, refreſhed her ſelf in her dark and ſad hours; to whom therefore doth her Picture more of right belong, than unto your ſelf? It might indeed have deſerved a better hand, but as it is, I dare ſay your Ladiſhip will ſee many a line in her countenance, which you will remember and ſay, Sic vultus, ſic illa manus, ſic ora ferebat, that it is exceeding like your Ladiſhips noble Siſter. If your Ladiſhip asketh why it cometh ſo late after her Funerals, I muſt anſwer, Madam, that your Honour is not altogether ignorant what hath happened to me ſince that time; notwithſtanding which, the Copy of theſe ſheets were in the Stationers hands more than two years ſince, and unhappily (through his ſlowneſs) periſhed in your dreadful Burning: ſince which I have indeed had time enough to have revived them, but have been diſtracted with ſo much buſineſs of other natures, as before this time I have not been able to finiſh what

long

long ſince I intended, and had begun. They now come forth not in ſo good a dreſs as I could wiſh, but as imperfectly as works uſe to do, finiſhed in ſo many parts as I have been inforced to finiſh them in, and by.

Such as they are, I moſt humbly offer them to your Honour, *as a ſmall oblation to the memory of her to whom your* Ladiſhip *knows I owed much more; and as a poor acknowledgement of the many obligations which it hath pleaſed your* Ladiſhip *to lay upon me, who have no way, but ſuch as this; and my fervent prayers to approve my ſelf*

Your Honours moſt
humbly obliged
Servant,

J. C.

TO

To the *MEMORY* OF THE RIGHT HONOURABLE, THE Lady FRANCES HOBART, late of *Norwich*.

YOu who think *Honours* dispensations be
From the severer acts of *Piety*,
Who judge your selves *too great* for to be *good*,
And that *Religion* would but *stain* your blood:
That *Kneeling* wears out cloths too fast, and *Prayer*
Is but *Fanaticks* beating of the Air:
Who at a Sermon, think an *hour*, an *age*;
And *five hours*, but a *moment* on a *Stage*;
To whom *to live* is nothing, but to *eat*,
And *drink*, and *sleep*, and *dress*, and *play*, and *prate*,
And make some *visits*, that your friends may see
What fine, gay nothings of mankind you be,
Whose sensual lives might justly raise disputes,
Whether your souls be *Rationals*, or *Brutes*:
Turn here your wanton eyes, here you may spy
A true *Exemplar of Nobility*;
One, who judg'd to be eminently good;
The best improvement of her noble blood,
Who sacrific'd th' advantage of her birth,
And whatsoever else she had from earth,
To credit waies of *Piety*, and show
The world, that Godliness is not below
The highest mortal; who with you could glory
Of all those things, which serve to fill your story.

Birth

Birth, *Breeding*, *Beauty*, *Riches*, *Honours*, she
Knew what there was of true felicity
In these. The strains of courtesie and wit,
What Courtship several qualities would fit
She knew, how to receive a Complement,
And to return it with a Grace, when lent;
And one thing more she knew, which was, to call
These *Trifling Vanities*, and slight them all.
To her to live, was to *Read*, *Hear* and *Pray*;
Her life was but *one constant Sabbath day*.
She sometime went abroad ('tis true) but trode Act. 10. 38.
Her Saviour's path, she went, but *doing good*.
Had she been *Catholick* in the *Romish sense*,
What stock their thrifty Church had raised hence
For poorer *Madams*! Oh! how many pair
Would she alone have *watch'd* for unto *prayer*?
How many might have sate at Cards, and sent
Their Beads to her, to drop for them? or spent
Their time at Playes, and charg'd her with their share
Of close *Devotions*? she had had to spare.

She of *Moguntia*, whom the Priest espied
With troops of *Devils*, riding all astride,
On her long train, to Church (they from her glass
Came with her something tardy unto Mass;
Mean while, where were the *Exorcists* to indure
Upon the holy ground fiends so impure?)
Had notwithstanding scap'd the purging fire,
If this rare *Lady* had been of their *Quire*;
Her *early presence*, and her *Zeal* (no doubt)
Had clear'd the hallowed soil, scar'd spirits out.
The *Holy-water* had been spar'd, her eyes
Had dropt the lazy Ladies Sacrifice.

V. Gazei pia hilaria Lond. 1657. p. 67. Ex Cæsar. l. 5. cap. 5.

Fond Catholicks! charge us no more that we
Advancing *Faith*, teach *good works* needless be.
This *Protestant* out-did you every one,
And yet lookt to be sav'd by *Faith alone*.
Love to your selves is what makes you so free,
And by your works you think to satisfie.
Her good deeds were no *penance*; yet their store
Was every whit as great, if not much more

Than

Than yours, which are design'd in *Commutation*
For *Purgatorial pains*, or *expiation*
Of some *flagitious crimes*. Her purer love
To Christ, constrain'd her noble soul above
Your *Lott'ry deeds*, you'd here your *peace* throw down,
Did not you vainly hope to draw a *Crown*.
You put your Alms to *interest*, for gain,
She lent, she gave, and *lookt for naught again*.
You in Devotions who were wont to go
To *Walsingham*, hence forward, learn to know
The way to *Chapplefield*, there you may see
The place where once this Saint abode, where she
So long wrought *Miracles of Love*: Far more
Than your dull *Colledge*, that was there before.
Thence weeping pass to *Blicklin* vault, and there
Pay your *Devotions* to her *Sepulchre*:
When this is done, go you and do likewise
Acknowledge *Christ* the only *Sacrifice*
For *Sin*. Take *Heaven* upon the gift of *Grace*,
Then work as she. Thus you may see the place
Where she abides, and a *Saint Frances* find
(Can you believe't?) *that was not of your mind*.

ERRATA.

PAge 3. line 10. read feeble Dove, p. 5. l. *penult.* r. *Dinah*, p. 6. l. 9. r. she, p. 19. l. 12. *delt* ordinarily, p. 24. l. 1. r. from spending, p. 43. l. 13. r. *Jedidiah*, p. 46. l. 20. r. their, p. 54. l. 3. r. account of, p. 58. l. 30. r. *Fuel*, p. 59. l. *ult.* r. lazy, p. 64. l. 16. r. excell, p. 76. l. 28. r. because, p. 77. l. 1. r. these are, p. 80. l. *penult.* r. on, p. 86. l. 13. r. peruse *Justinians*, &c. p. 101. l. 8. r. the loss, p. 103. l. *ult.* r. all the, p. 110. l. 22. r. *Paul*, p. 121. l. 17. r. in the Land, p. 122. l. 3. r. demission, p. 153. l. 32. r. *& custos*.

In the second Part.

In the Epist. Ded. p. 3. l. 13. r. *Navis*, p. 6. r. approve himself, p. 178. l. 22. r. 2, p. 183. l. 8. r. Root, p. 187. l. 3. the verse misquoted, 30. for 39. p. 195. l. 16. r. in, p. 199. l. 22. r. the, p. 201. l. 32. r. eternal, p. 208. l. 17. r. An hungring after, p. 210. l. 2. a comma at doubting, p. 212. marg. r. Cant. 8. 5. p. 217. l. *penult.* r. hath done. p. 222. l. 18. r. in, p. 232. l. 4. blot out do, p. 240. l. 9. r. to, p. 240. l. 21. r. face.

A short Account
Of the *Holy Life* and *Death*
Of the Right Honourable,
The Lady *Frances Hobart*,
the Relict of Sir *John Hobart*,
late of *Blicklin* in the County of *Norfolk*, Baronet.

SAint *John* heard *a voice from Heaven, saying write*; to which when he replied, *What shall I write?* the answer was, *Blessed are the dead which dye in the Lord, from henceforth, yea saith the Spirit that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.* A *phrase* which implies not any *motion of works*, but rather the *promotion of the person* that hath wrought, and *remuneration* for his or her work. This reward they have *partly in Heaven*, where Christ rewards his *Saints* though not *for the merit of their works*, yet *according to them*, Rev. 22. 12. both for *nature* and *degree*, and they partly have it *upon the Earth*, whiles the *name of the wicked rotts*; their *memory is blessed*, and wherever the *Gospel*

Rev. 14. 13.

Rev. 22. 12.

is preached, what they *have done is told in remembrance of them.* The Widows, *while they*
Acts 9. 39. *wept for* Dorcas, *shewed the Coats and Garments she had made.* *Solomon* commands that *the Virtuous Woman should have the fruit of her hands, and that her own works should praise her in the Gates.* This is my present task, and the last office I have to perform, to that *great* and *noble person*, whose death hath turned us into an *house of mourning.*

I shall begin with her *cradle*, and consider her in the *threefold period of her life*, while a *Virgin*, a *Wife*, and a *Widow*: but I shall lightly pass over the two former, knowing nothing but what I gathered from her *Ladyships* various, occasional discourses during the *eighteen last years* of her life, in which, I had the *honour* of a daily *converse* with her *Ladyship*, as to which I had the advantage of a *stricter observation.*

This noble *Lady* was born in *London* in the year 1603. being the *eldest* of *eight daughters* who all lived to marriageable years, with which it pleased God to bless the *Right Honourable, John*, (late) *Earl* of *Bridgewater, Viscount Brackley*, and Lord *Ellsmore*, *Lord President of Wales.* By his noble *Lady* the Lady *Frances* daughter to the Right Honourable *Ferdinando Earl of Derby.*

Of this *twice noble stock*, this *Excellent Lady* was the *First-fruit*, a circumstance possibly not inconsiderable, for gaining credit to the following relation of her *vertuous life*: there being something of that in *Horace* true,

Fortes creantur fortibus, & bonis
Est in Juvencis, est in Equis patrum
Virtus, nec imbellem feroces
Progenerant Aquilæ columbam.
Doctrina sed vim promovet insitam,
Rectique cultus, pectora roborant.

Such as the Parents, such the children be,
The breed of Horses, and Neat beasts we see,
In Spirit, like their dams and Sires prove,
Fierce Eagles bring not forth a Sable Dove.
——— *&c.*

It holds not indeed as to *infused habits*; *Justus non gignit justum, sed gignit hominem*, (said *Augustine*) but as to Moral *habits* which have their *seeds* and *rudiments* in nature, there's much in it. *Splendid* and *noble actions*, are much advantaged by this foundation, though *education* raiseth the building, and Grace at last layeth the *Corner-stone*, perfecting what thus is *began in nature*, and improved by *instruction* and *education*.

This *Noble Lady* had no sooner passed the hands of her Nurse, and began to use her tongue, but she was in her Fathers house betrusted to the tuition of a *French Gentlewoman* (whom I have often heard her mention with a great deal of *honour*) from her she learned to speak the *French tongue*, before she could distinctly speak *English*; a faculty which she retained to her dying day: And having her *Organs* of speech so early formed to it, she so naturally accented it, that Natives

of that Country would hardly believe her born in *England*.

The years of her *Nonage* were ſpent in learning things proper for that Age, and which might acſompliſh her for that noble ſtation which ſhe was ere long to take up in the World. Now ſhe learned to *handle her Lute*, to *ſing*, *dance*, &c. things in her maturer Age of which ſhe made little or no uſe, and far leſs reckoning; but they fitted her for the *Court*, which ſhe was to be acquainted with, before ſhe could be diſmiſſed into the *Country*: Now ſhe learned to *read*, to *write*, and *caſt account nimbly* and *exactly*, and to uſe her Needle, and *order the affairs of an houſhold*, things which were afterwards to her and her *dear husband* alſo of extraordinary advantage. Now partly by the diligence of her *Governeſs*, partly by the *Care* of one Mr. *Moor* (her *Fathers Chaplain*) partly by the ſuperintendent care of *my Lord* her Father, ſhe was fully inſtructed in the *principles of Religion*. As to which I have often heard her with honour mention her *Governeſs*, and her *Noble Father*. Her *father* for ſeaſoning her againſt *Arminian Principles*, and once *ſuſpending her from the Sacrament* upon his *re-examination of her*, after that his *Chaplain* had paſſed an haſty approbation of her. Her *Governeſs*, for the good ſtories ſhe would tell her, the good counſel ſhe would give her, and her care of her information as to Religion: She would alwayes ſay, that ſhe learned of her to be a *Calviniſt* in point of *Doctrine*, and a *Presbyterian* as to Diſcipline, for it ſeemeth

ſhe

she was both, flying her own Country for her Religion, or at least the Daughter of Parents who upon the massacre so fled (for truly I do not well remember every particular in her Ladyships relations though I often heard them.) I have often heard her discourse with a *gratefull remembrance* how exactly the hours of her dayes were distributed to these several kinds of instruction: So as no time was left her, unless a little *proportion* for *exercise*; and what was assigned for her more *private devotions* (as to which her Governess was her most *faithfull monitor*) or for the more *publick Religious Duties* of the Family, her presence at which was as diligently required by *my Lord her father.*

The *Evangelist* recordeth concerning our *Saviour*, That he *went down to* Nazareth *and dwelt with his Parents*, and was *subject to them.* Indeed *subjection to Parents*, is the greatest vertue can adorn so tender an age; the want of this in our Children, is often caused by our selves, God ordinarily securing the *Parental Authority*, till themselves prostitute it. This *Rare Lady* was bred up in this subjection: I have heard her say that *till she was married she never more than once sate down in the presence of her Lady-mother: never was allowed to stay in a room with her when she received the visits of other Ladyes*, &c. these and many other things of like *severity* I remember I have had in discourse from her which now have slipt my memory. She did not take a liberty like *Denyal* to go *see the Daughters of the Land* at her own plea-

Luk. 2. 15.

sure. Her mother was like the *cloud* unto her, when *she moved to Court the Daughter moved also, when she sate at home the daughter moved not at all.* I have often heard her mention it to the great honour of her Mother, *That she would require her constant attendance upon her self; both going to the Court,* and *returning from it*; and she was to her mother as the *Centurions servant* unto him. If they said unto her *Go* she went, if they said *Come*, she came, if *Do this*, she did it. Having attained to riper years she frequently was at the Court of King *James*, and *Queen Ann*, and was in great favour with that *Queen*, and *King Charles* the first, then *Prince of Wales*. I do not remember any thing I have heard from her much momentous as to this *part of her life*, unless *frequent sad reflexions* upon her self, for mispending part of many *Lords dayes*, in *masks*, and other *Court pastimes*, according to the fashion of others in her circumstances. This she would often *mention with bitterness*, and *honourably mention* and prefer before her self one of her *Noble Sisters*, who in her youth had a just sense of that errour, and courage enough to resist the temptations to it. It was the only thing in which I ever heard her repent her obedience to, and attendance upon her *Mother*, whom yet she thought exceeding *pious*, and paid alwayes a just honour to her *mention* and *memory*; which reverence she had also for her Noble Father. I remember the *Passion* she fell into when she heard of his death (though I communicated it to her with as much ad-

vantage as I could to hinder sudden passions) which made me as the Jews cry out, *Behold, how she loved him!* The sequel of this discourse will evidence that it is not through want of more momentous matter, that I instance in these things of more minute consideration: But I have the rather mentioned them, to let my *Readers* see, how far we are degenerated from the ancient culture of youth, and that orderly Discipline, under which those *male and female Worthies* were educated, who have *done famously* in our *Ephrata*, and what probably is one great cause of that *impudent licentiousness* which dishonoureth the present generation.

The Generous Soul of this excellent *Lady* was ordained to higher things than *Balls*, and *Masques*, and *Visits*. It now grew time for a *Plant* bred under so rare a *cultivation*, to be *removed* into another *place*, That her God might have the glory, and her *generation* the fruit of such an education. Her native *beauty*, and the rare parts she began to discover, made many *noble persons* desire her in marriage, but to shew how early she was mortified to the *vanities* of youth, with the approbation of her Parents, she at last *chose* a *Widower* for her first, and only husband: Sir *John Hobart* of *Blicklin* in the *County* of *Norfolk*, *Baronet*; he was the eldest Son of Sir *Henry Hobart* at that time *Lord Chief Justice*, and *Chancellour to the Prince*. A Person indeed (as to title) in the lowest order of the *Nobility*, but one whose Estate bare a full proportion to his quality,

and whose noble *spirit*, and *temper* far better suited this excellent *Lady* than a greater title with another *temper* and *spirit* would have done. She was married to this worthy person in the year.

In her Conjugal Relation she was now more perspicuous, she was now planted upon an hill, where those rare seeds which had been sown in her ingenuous Soul during her *Non-age* began to spring up, and bring forth abundant fruit, in that triple capacity in which this relation (in some little succession) intituled her, that (I mean) of 1. a *Wife* to a worthy Husband. 2. *A Parent to Children*, and 3. a *Governess to a numerous Family of Servants*.

The *Philosopher* having rationally evinced the *difference of vertues*, *with relation to their subjects*, and shewn some more proper to those that *Govern*, and others to *such as are governed*; for the *Vertues* of a *good Wife* reckons up, *Chastity*, *Prudent ordering of the affairs of the household within doors*. *Reverence to her Husbands person*, seen in a *respective behaviour to him*, *a concealing his weaknesses*, *and obedience to his commands*. *Together with a just sympathy*, *and patient sharing with him the vicissitude of Providences under which he is exercised*. All which (being in themselves but morall vertues dictated by the light of Nature) God in holy Writ, by several Precepts, and recommendations in the allowed examples of his *Saints* (there canonized) hath made the religious dutyes of the *Christian Wife*, in obedience

dience to his *superiour commands*, and under the encouragement of many *great, and precious promises*, for the glorifying of his holy Name who first *instituted this relation* (and therefore to him of right it belonged to give lawes to it) who also in his Word hath superadded another duty of a *good Wife*, not understood by the *Philosopher*, (viz.) a *due regard to the salvation of the Soul of her Husband*, 1 Cor. 7. 16. *What knowest thou O Wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband?*

For the first of these, this *excellent Lady* rated her self by *Julius Cæsars* reckoning, *not judging it enough for her to be thus vertuous, unless she also lived above the suspicion of the contrary.* To let us know that she had not forgot *the Law of her Mother*, she would often mention a saying of hers: *That temptations to the Violation of the honour of Ladyes in this particular, originally proceeded from some too light and familiar carriage first in themselves; and that wanton was suffered to come too near who came to be denyed.* Her constant behaviour therefore was tempered with that *affability*, and *gravity* which in conjunction best became a person of her *Ladyships* honour. And that she might shew the Church of *Rome* a *Protestant Lady* possessed of that threefold *chastity* which they make so meritorious, as she had managed her state of Virginity (and that upon the most publick *Theatre* in our English World) so as she would often bless God who had taught her so to behave her self that none ever durst offer any rudeness to her, and her *conjugal*

relation

relation, without the least stain upon her honour: So having lost the man of her bosom, and again reduced to a single condition, she grew to be something *superstitious* in this thing, not only resolving (through Gods assistance) to go to her Grave having *been only the Wife of one Husband*; but almost looking upon it as a piece of her duty, and often reckoning it a piece of the honour of her *fathers house*, that none of her Noble Sisters (left Widows) had married a second time.

The *Philosopher* allots to the vertuous wife, the governance of the house within doors, and a wiser than he had before in the description of his *Vertuous Woman* told us, *That she looketh well to the affairs of her household, and the heart of her husband trusteth in her*: She was not indeed under such circumstances, as she needed to *lay her hands to the spindle*, or to *hold the distaff* (yet that was often her divertisement) but it might truly be said of her, *that she looked well to the affairs of her house, and that the heart of her Husband trusted in her.* And that not only as to the affairs of her House within, in respect of which she was so vigilant as (during the time that I waited on her) it was no easie thing for any servant to impose upon her) but also to those which were more extrinsecal, and ordinarily no womens imployment. Perceiving her dear Husband, ingaged in a great debt, she undertook the management of his whole estate, and auditing all his accounts, and that to so good a purpose, that in a few years, she had shortned his debt *Six thousand pounds.* The

Prov. 31. 27. 11.

The Apostle treating of the duties of the *Wife*, saith, *Eph.* 5. 31. *Let the Wife see she reverence her husband*, and St. *Peter* observeth that *Sarah* did so, and attested it by calling him *Lord*, which yet had not been much significant if it had not been conjoyned, with a *prudent concealing infirmities*, and a *due Obedience* to his *just commands*. This *Noble Lady* did not only so in words, but really testifie the *honour and reverence she bare unto her head*. Her prudent *concealing infirmities* was obvious to all (though no proper matter for this discourse). Her *Obedience* to her Husbands commands was so absolute as if she had learnt of *Aristotle*, *that the Commands of the husband are a law, by God imposed on the Wife by matrimonial conjunction*. She had indeed learned of a better Tutour, *Eph.* 4. 22. *Wives submit your selves to your own husbands as unto the Lord, for the husband is the head of the Wife, even as Christ is the head of the Church.*

Arist. Oeconom. lib. 2.

But (above all) most remarkable was this incomparable *Ladies Christian* patient *sympathy* with her dear husband, in those bodily afflictions with which it pleased God to exercise him, exemplifying that of *Demosthenes*, *how valuable to an husband on a sick bed a good Wife is*. It pleased God to exercise him with successive afflictions, though in different degrees even from her first Espousals to him. and to allott him this Noble Lady, as much for a *Nurse* as for a *Wife*. Her care for him, and tenderness of him was beyond expression, of which I was an ocular witness for the seven

ὅσου ἀξία ἐστι γυνὴ ἐν ταῖς νόσοις παροῦσα κάμνοντι ἀνθρώπῳ.

ven or eight last moneths of his life, when his distempers grew heavieſt upon him. In the day time ſhe confined her ſelf to his Chamber, ſeldom leaving him for an hour, unleſs to wait upon publick Ordinances, or to take her daily bread, or perform her ſecret Devotions. In the night ſhe watched with him to ſuch a ſtrange exceſs, as all about her wondred how thin body could bear, ſeldom laying her ſelf down to take any reſt till two or three of the Clock in the morning, and then upon an *ordinary Couch* in his Chamber, where ſhe might hear every groan, and be at hand to every need. Thus ſhe approved her ſelf a Vertuous Wife according to the rules of *Philoſophy*, with this difference, that ſhe did all this, *from a more noble Principle, in a more excellent Manner*, and *to a more noble End*. But this was not all, ſhe was as much a *meet help for him* as to the *things of Eternity*, and the *ſalvation* of his ſoul, as in the things which concerned this life.

The familiar *Compellation* which her *Noble husband* (generally) uſed to her was, *My dear Saint*, and this (not without a juſt cauſe) from the experience he had had of her as to ſpiritual things. *When thou art converted* (ſaith our *Saviour*) *ſtrengthen thy Brethren*. No ſooner had God wrought a change in the heart of this *Noble Lady*, but her great ſollicitude was for the *husband of her boſom*, that ſin might not reſt upon him. When Chriſt had called *Philip*, *Joh.* 1. 45. *Philip findeth Nathaniel, and ſaith unto him*, we have found him

whom *Moses in the Law, and the Prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth.* This *Lady* rightly apprehended that this *spiritual charity* ought to begin at home. By her prudent monitions, and passionate intreaties her husband was won from what had been the *vanities of his youth.*

To abhorre the things wherein he had formerly delighted, to inquire after, choose, be acquainted with, and to delight in those good wayes of God, with which formerly he had no acquaintance, and against which (for want of a due knowledge of them) he had formerly taken up a prejudice. He was naturally inclined to some *excess in passion*, and in the vanity of his youth had contracted an habit of *swearing*, of the evil of which being convinced, he found it yet difficult wholly to leave it, and as a means in order to it injoyned his *Lady, privily to pinch his Arm*, when he heard any Oath slip from him, to which reproof he would ordinarily with a great deal of kindness reply, *I thank thee my dear Saint*; and by this means was at length able wholly to abstain from that vice, and to fear an Oath, unwearicdly to desire, and to be present at *private Fasts*, and other Religious duties, severely to reprove others (especially his servants) and admonish his friends of those errors which had formerly been too much his own pleasure and delight. In short, by the blessing of God upon the publick Ministry of the Word, upon which he now diligently attended, and the more *private* means of this

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Excellent Lady. This worthy person, before he died, was brought to such a good hope *through grace*, for several moneths, without perturbations, to look upon death every day making its nearer approaches to him, and at last, not without testimony of a *true hope in God*, quietly to commit his Soul into the hands of his blessed *Redeemer*. A person who did remarkably serve his generation, and doubtless he had been an eminent instrument, if it had pleased God to have granted him a longer life, being one who might erre, through prejudice, or misapprehension, but of that *nobleness* of *temper*, height of *courage* and *spirit*, that he never valued cost, nor wanted an *heart* to go through with any thing of the goodness and justice of which he was once convinced; and to whom (excepting *Academical learning*, which his younger years were not patient of) nothing was wanting which could constitute, adorn, and accomplish a *brave and gallant man*.

But I am digressed, and must return; we have hitherto only viewed this noble Lady in her *Conjugal capacity*, as she stood concerned in her husband. We must now view her in her *Parental relation*, (for God had not given *her a barren womb*, *nor dry breasts*, though indeed for the further triall of her *faith* and *patience*, he made her ordinarily to *bring forth to the grave*) she was the Mother of Nine Children, of which only one (that a daughter) lived to marriageable years, the rest died all either in their *infancy*, or before they had

arrived

arrived to their years of *Puberty*. The *young Lady* (who was the only Coal God had left her alive) was afterwards married to an *Honourable* and *worthy person*, Sir *John Hobart Baronet*, the heir of her Fathers *honour* and *Family*, by whom it pleased God after some years to give her a Son, after which this *young* and *noble Lady* did not long survive, being immaturely taken away by the *Small-pox*, many years before the death of our *Noble Lady*; nor did her only Childe long survive its mother, so that she lived to see her wise God stripping her of every branch that had sprang out of her root, to let her know he had a *better name for her than that of Sons and Daughters*.

Concerning her deportment to her other Children (whiles she enjoyed them) I can say nothing, having not had the advantage of knowing her till some years had past after God had deprived her of them: Only may rationally presume it not unlike to what she shewed to the only surviver. For her I could say much, if while she had a being with us, by *her pious disposition, affable and ingenuous temper, and most virtuous conversation*, in short, by whatsoever accomplishments, could perfect and adorn a young and *Vertuous Lady*, she had *not* both approved her self to all to whom she was known, and also commended her betwixt whose knees she was educated to such an *Idea* of feminine perfection. *The instruction of her Father* (which she heard) *and the Law of her Mother, which she did not forsake,*

proved

proved an Ornament of grace unto her head, and as chains of Gold, and Orient Pearls *about her neck*. And indeed, as there was nothing wanting in nature to accomplish that *young* and *excellent Lady*; so her vertuous Mother had resolved that nothing should be wanting which either her own care, or the Art of others could help her to. Nor did this *Rare Lady*, shew more of a Mother to her while she lived, than of a *Christian Mother*, when it pleased God to *extinguish* this *light of her eyes*, and quench this *only coal* which he had left her; taking her death with that *due sense*, which became so *tender*, and *indulgent a mother*; and yet with that *patience* and *fortitude*, which became not only her rational soul, who considered she had brought forth a mortall Daughter, but also a *submissive Christian*, who had learned not to repine against Heaven, but in a great measure to melt down her own, into the divine will.

If we once more turn, and consider this *Noble person* in the relation of a *Mistresse* to a numerous family of Servants, we shall finde her there conversant with the same *honour* which discovered it self in all her other capacities. Though *Aristotle* was a stranger to her, yet she had learned this rule. *So to behave her self, towards her Servants, as that her carriage would neither allow them to be proud or malapert; nor yet did discourage them into any baseness of spirit.* After that the choice of her servants came intirely to her self, her great care in the first place was to procure persons

fearing

fearing God, to be nigh unto her. The number of these being few in this great licentiousness of Youth, she *preferred vertuous* and *sober persons*, she might indeed (as to such) be once and again deceived, but none ever abode in her house, when she had once discovered them to be *Drunkards*, *Unclean persons*, *Profane*, *Swearers or Cursers*, *Enemies to Religion and Godliness*, or any other way scandalous: and her eye was so much about her house, her care so much for the discipline of it, as it was not eatie for any such person to be long concealed, but he was discerned either by her *Ladyships* own eye, or by her *Steward's*.

She alwayes gave noble *messes of meat* to her servants, and portions to her *maidens*; and she also took more than ordinary care for the better Concerns of their immortal Souls. In short, there is none ever served her who will not *praise her in the gates*; none who ever waited upon her but will *rise* up and *call her blessed*.

3. But my Pen hasteneth to the consideration of this *Honourable person* in the third, and last period of her life; when she was again reduced to a single state: In this she was indeed best known unto me, having had the happiness to wait upon her during this whole time, and for some little time before (about seven or eight moneths) from whence I shall begin my story. It was in *September* 1646. that I was invited by Sir *John Hobart* (at that time alive) to take my Chamber in his house,

 whiles

(whiles I discharged my Ministerial Office in the City); and to take some oversight of his Family as to the things of God. Sir *John* himself having lately been valetudinarious, and the Family without any *spiritual guide*, I found it in some disorder, and the severall persons in it (my *Ladyes Daughter only excepted*) being persons grown in years, I apprehended it no easie thing to reduce it to a due Religious Order, and Discipline. My design was (it being a Family of much leisure) to bring it up to a *Course of Prayer* (in conformity to *Davids* Copy, *Morning* and *Evening* and at *Noon-time*; *Reading some portion of Scripture* twice each day, and *expounding it*, as my leisure would allow me) *Catechizing* once every week, a *stricter observation* of the Lords dayes, and *Repetitions* of *Sermons*, both on that, and other dayes, when we had attended upon the publick Ordinances. I did not do this, as thinking it what God requireth of all Families, but in regard, I thought God expected more of us to whom he had given more leisure from distracting occasions of the World: Partly, in regard my hands at that time were not so full of more publick employment, but I could attend this more than ordinary service in the Family; and indeed, because I thought I saw the Family so much behind hand as to spiritual knowledge, as ordinary performances in a short time were not like to reach the end which I aimed at.

As to the generality of the Servants, I feared this might prove *like the putting of New*

Wine

Wine into old Bottles, and be *judged a yoke they were not able to bear*. I therefore first communicated my thoughts to my Lady (Sir *John Hobarts* sickly state not allowing much liberty of discourse at that time). Her *Ladyship* chearfully approving my thoughts, propounded them to her *husband*, who with *great expressions of thankfulness*, testified his *approbation* to me, and commanded his Servants diligently to attend the duties; and himself, when his distempers would permit him, was never absent ordinarily (for some time) at our Prayers. At *Noon* and *Night* he was with us. The Morning Service was by *seven of the Clock*, rarely after eight, from which her *Ladyship*, unless in a bed of sickness) in eighteen years I think was hardly twice absent, and was ordinarily with the first of the Family in the room where they were performed, before her sicklines brought them to her own Chamber.

The business of *Catechizing* was more *difficult*, yet made easie by these *noble Parents*, prevailing with their own Daughter, to go before the Family in a *noble Example*, which she continued untill she had attained a competent knowledge in the most necessary Principles of *Religion*. From the time I first came to the Family, it pleased God to keep Sir *John Hobart*, in a dying condition (though he had some more lucid intervals than other;) within less than eight moneths God removed him into a better life. It was his great *satisfaction* all along his sickness to see his *dear*

Daughter, making such a proficiency in the knowledge of the *things of God*, and so willing to set an example to his Family; and he mentioned it as his *dying comfort*, that he had seen his Family before his death in a course of Reformation, which he doubted not but his *Lady* would bring to perfection.

Now was this *Excellent Lady* brought to the third and last period of her life. Now she sate *solitary as a Widow*; mourning as a Turtle that had lost her *Mate*, and for a while not knowing how to receive comfort because *He was not*. Having recovered her self from her passion, and learned to hold her peace because this was the *Lords doing*, she made it her first request to me, that I would abide with her, and keep on the course of Religious duty in the Family, which I had began, proposing to me an high *incouragement* from an assurance that I should find her, proposing to her self the pattern of the man according to Gods own heart, *Psal.* 101. 1, 2, 6, 7. endeavouring to *walk in her house with a perfect heart*. That *those who were of a froward spirit should depart from her*: That *her eyes should be upon the faithfull in the land, they should serve her*. That *he who wrought deceit should not dwell in her house; he that told lies should not tarry in her sight*. To which resolution she was afterwards very severe. The times began to be troublesome, through the distempers of the Army, and some fears began then to arise that Ministers, who could not comply with

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the extravagancies of that time should not be suffered to enjoy their publick liberty: Her *Ladyship* partly to obviate that Evil, partly to give her self advantage (however times fell) to do good to the Souls of many; at no small charge, converted some less usefull *lower rooms of her house* into a *Chappel* which was conveniently capacious of more than 200 persons. Here she obliged me at first to preach a *Lecture* every week, and to repeat one or both of my Sermons every *Lords Day at night*, after the more publick Sermons were finished in the Town, which for 16 years was continued to a very full *Auditory*, and to the great advantage of many younger persons, and of those who had not such advantages as they desired in their own houses, for hearing again what they had been hearing in the day time. A work of piety the more remarkable for this, her *Ladyships Chappel* lying in the way to that field where the younger persons were formerly wont to profane the latter part of the Lords day, by idle walks, discourses and Recreations, intercepted many of them, and proved a *bait* to allure them both (from the example of it) into a further reverence of the *Sabbath*; and (from the Doctrine they heard there) to bring them to a further acquaintance with God. After this she ingaged me also to preach a Morning Sermon there on the Lords dayes (those monthly dayes only excepted when I was to administer the *Communion* of the Lords Supper more publickly). This

course her *Ladyship* continued so long as I had a liberty to preach, or her Ladyship a liberty to *hear*. But, that I may speak more distinctly:

The *Christian Philosopher* divideth all vertue into *Piety*, and *Probity*; which indeed is our Saviours division of the whole Law into the two Precepts: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*; and *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*. We must first consider her Ladyships obedience to the *first*, and then to the *second*.

1. Even from her Childhood, some seeds of severer piety began to discover themselves in her. I have heard her mention the *pleasure* she then took in reading Mr. *Dod's Exposition* of the *Commandements*. Then (as I have heard her relate it) her pleasure was in those Ministers whose Doctrine was most lively, and whose lives were most pure and holy. But her self would constantly own the fixed change of her heart to have been wrought by God under the Ministry of that eminent Servant of God, Mr. *John Carter*, late Minister of St. *Peters Mancraft* in *Norwich*, of whom she was a constant Hearer. Her pious Soul having thus *been kindled* with an holy fire, quickly flamed in a *Gospel conversation*, her *light shining out so before* others, that *they saw her good works, and glorified her Father which was in Heaven*: And I doubt not but many in the view of them, *glorified God in the day of their Visitation*. I know not whether (in the

the memory of any) the City of *Norwich* was bleſſed with any perſon of her quality, who in any proportion to her, incouraged the wayes of God with her Purſe, and recommended them by her unparallel'd example. Let us take the due proportion of a Chriſtian *ſingle-woman* from the great Apoſtle of the Gentiles, and compare her with his Rule. He ſpeaking, 1 *Cor.* 7. 34. of *married* and *unmarried* Chriſtian women, ſaith, *The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that ſhe may be holy both in body and ſpirit, but ſhe that is married, careth for the things of the world, that ſhe may pleaſe her husband.* And the ſame Apoſtle giving us the deſcription of a *Widow indeed*, deciphereth her thus: 1. *Negatively*, ſhe is *one that liveth not in pleaſures*, for (ſaith he) *The woman that liveth in pleaſure is dead while ſhe lives.* 2. *Poſitively* he deſcribes her thus, *She truſteth in God*, and *continues in ſupplications night and day*: and directing what Widow he would have dignified in the Church he ſaith, *If ſhe hath been the Wife of one husband*, (by which I conceive he underſtands Chaſtity) *if ſhe be well reported of for good works, if ſhe have brought up children, and lodged ſtrangers, if ſhe have waſhed the Saints feet, if ſhe hath relieved the afflicted, and diligently followed every good work.* We ſhall find this excellent *Lady* Saint *Pauls qualified Widow.*

1 Cor. 7. 34.

1 Tim. 5. 5.

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1. *Negatively: She was none of thoſe who lived in pleaſure while ſhe lived.* Very far from ſpending her precious time in *ſleep*, or *banquets*, at *Balls* or *profane Playes*, or *inſignificant Viſits*,

or that spend their Estates in *soft* and *gay Garments*, or indulging their *Palats*, besides what time she necessarily spent in the services of her body, she spent all her hours, *either in the more publick or private exercises of Religion*, or in such Visits where she might either do or receive good; if she made any other, they were her burthen rather than pleasure, to repay the civilities of others, never being patient of being out-done in Civilities. She seldom spent *half an hour* either in a *Dinner* or *Supper*, and both ate and drank in so small proportions, that (not denying allowances for particular constitutions) she was a perfect demonstration, *how little Nature would be content with*: she was so far from taking pleasure in *costly raiment*, that for some years after the loss of her *dear husband*, she could not be perswaded to *wear a silk Gown*; and professed to do it, that she might have abundantly to relieve poor Christians in want: and when at any time, she saw an *object of charity* requiring a greater proportion than suited her *present stock* of money, she would yet do it, telling me, *it was but wearing a Gown* two or three *moneths longer*: For *Musick*, *Dancings*, *Gamings*, her serious mortified Soul was grown a perfect stranger to them.

Untill some few years before her death, when infirmities increasing upon her, suffered her not to do as formerly. This was the constant course of her life. She seldom was in her bed after Four of the Clock in the morning, (towards her latter end, her health inforced her

her to abide in it longer; yet to the last, Seven was her utmost hour): from the time she rose till Seven of the Clock, she spent her time in the private Devotions and retirements of her Closet; then she came out to the more publick duties of the family, which she never missed, and seldom but was first in the room, in Prayer, Reading the Scriptures, Expounding, one or more of these Exercises (as opportunity served) and some discourses afterward she then usually spent more than an hour, the rest of her time till Noon was spent in her Chamber in dressing, or in her Closet, reading, looking over Accounts, &c. Sometimes for half an hour she walked. Then she came out again to Prayer in her Family, in which, and in Dinner, and following Discourses she usually spent two hours, and sometimes exercised her self for half an hour afterward. Her afternoon was spent in reading, or making Visits chiefly to such Christians, as she had an Interest in; or sometimes in *spinning* or *sowing* with her Maids. About Six she again came to her Family-duties: in which, at Supper, and discourses after it, she ordinarily spent three hours, and then withdrew to her Closet, for many years together there she abode reading and praying till Twelve or One of the Clock: till at last with no ordinary difficulty, she was perswaded by her *learned Physitian* to abate an hour or two of that excess, for her health sake. Thus she lived a most mortified life to all the contents of this World, excepting only what arose from Communion with God, and his

people;

people; using as great severity to her self as those who judge such Castigations of their body the price of Heaven.

2. The *Positive part* of St. *Pauls description*, in the first place respects Religion; so he describeth her to be one, 1. *Trusting in God.* 2. *Continuing in supplications night and day.* 3. *Caring for the things of the Lord, that she might be holy in body, and minde, and spirit.* The first is an *internal*, the second a *more external Act of Religion. Trusting in God*, as it speaketh our *secret affiance* in, and *adherence to* the *promises* for this life or that to come, is so secret an act of the soul, that oft-times, the Soul that doth it, cannot discern the truth of its own act, much less can another discern it otherwise than from the effects. Some of those effects, which will come neareſt the certain discovery of this habit, are, an *unfained love to the Word and Ordinances of God*; *Freedom from distracting cares for to morrow*; *Love to God*; *Fear of offending him*; *Hope in his mercy*, &c. How much this admirable *Lady* valued *the Word* and *Ordinances of God*, was conspicuous to all that knew her, most to us who had the advantage of more intimate communion with her: Besides that she was rarely to be found alone without her Bible before her, she had drawn up for her self a method for reading the Scripture (to which she was very strict) so as every year she read over the *Psalms*, Twelve times, the *New Testament thrice*, and the other part of *the Old Testament once*. Besides this, that she might want no satisfacti-

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on to any doubt arising upon her reading the Scripture, she had furnished her self with a large Library of English Divines, which cost her not much less than 100 *l.* of which she made a daily use: She was (while in health) unwearable in her attendance upon Sermons, such especially where the Truths of God were opened most lively, and with least vanity, and in fullest evidence of Scripture; she ordinarily heard three or four Lecture Sermons in the week, and three on the Lords day, till her distempers so prevailed upon her, that she could not attend them without that heaviness which she was loth to discover, and which was her great affliction. This her love to the Word argued that she had chosen the Promises in it for her portion, and had cast her Soul upon them; how else were they so precious to her?

She was indeed a *Lady* exercised with her *doubts* and *fears*, and *love-jealousies*; rather evidences for, than against this adherence to her *dear Lord*. I have seen her in great *agonies* and *conflicts*, and almost refusing to be satisfied, but could never find that they argued more, than an earnest thirsting after *further evidences* of divine love than it pleased God for some time to *vouchsafe her*. She was possessed indeed of a *Noble Estate*, and so had not that temptation as others to *distrustfull cares* for the things of this life; yet so far as she could, she exercised this act of faith, never *caring for to morrow*, nor considering what it *might bring forth*: But freely spending her whole

whole revenue *in pious and charitable works* (that of it I mean which she could spare from the frugal expenses of her household) professing she desired no more, than to make her accounts of *Receits* and *Disbursements* even at the years end. Her *love to God* was beyond the *love of Women*, whether we view it in the more secret motions of her soul, or in more *imperate acts*: What sighs? what heart-breaking sadness, have I been a witness to from her, when she lay (at any time) under apprehensions of any degrees of divine desertions? or any suspicions of the truth of Grace in her own heart: What tears (in such dark hours) have I seen flow from her eyes in her Closet more privately? What groans have I heard from her, while we have been praying more publickly? On the other side, if at any time, she could have laid hold upon any good Word of God, if she had found any more freedom of spirit or heart, or felt what she judged an Efflux of divine love upon her Soul, What a chearfulness did we all the day see in her countenance? what freedom did we discern in her converse? It was no hard matter for me from the observation of her converse and countenance in the day-time, to judge how it had fared with her *Ladyships spirit* in her addresses to God that morning. Her *dread of God* was exceeding great. I have sometimes trembled to hear with what earnestness she would adjure me to be faithfull to her in the business of her Soul, and *not to suffer sin to rest upon her*. Her fear indeed was for some

some time too too servile, savouring too much of the *Spirit of Bondage*, but it was afterward, more *constantly Filial*, in all things discovered by a *reverential sense of the great and glorious Majesty of God*, and a fear of *wilfull sinning* against him.

Nor was this Excellent *Lady's Religion* such as to evince it to the World, she was put to flee to the plea of *a good heart* as a Sanctuary. Out of the abundance of Grace in her heart her mouth spake, her whole outward man moved in a just conformity to her *external profession*: She was exemplarily diligent and devout in all Religious performances.

Prayer was her great delight. To that form are the first spiritual words which the Childe of God speaketh. The first account we have of Saint *Paul* after his conversion was, *Behold he prayeth*, and this seemeth to have been the first study of this *Excellent Lady*: In the external performance of which, she found some difficulty, to relieve her self in which, she had furnished her Closet with most valuable English books, which contained *Forms of Prayer*, upon several occasions; in none of which she could find a *full satisfaction*, but ever and anon she was still at a loss for words fitted to the altering *complexion* of her spirit. To help her self, she procured her Pastor to draw up several Forms fitted to the frame of her Soul, at several times: And in this work when I was come into her Family she often imployed me, but still she remained dissatisfied, that she gave us so frequent troubles, and that after some

some years owning her self to be *Gods childe*, she should in any exigent be at a loss for words to take unto her self, and to say *Abba Father*. I humbly advised her to a prævious study of the more general matter, and method of Prayer, and of the *Divine Promises*, which are the sacred Obligations which *Prayer* puts in suit. As to the former, I drew up for her Ladyship a *Scheme* (which she kept hanging before her in her Closet to her dying day, describing to her the plainer and more ordinary method, and the more general matter of *Prayer*, and commended to her some Books which gave the fullest account of the *Promises*. After some small exercise of her self in both of them, she needed her *Prayer-books* and *Forms* no longer, but was able (as occasion ministred it self) to pour out her Soul to God according to her necessities, without any further *Monitor* than the *Spirit of Supplications* in conjunction with the pious workings of her own breast. And indeed after this she was no friend to *Forms*, she judged that they could never be used *with that warmth of affection, which attends the words of a good Christian, formed in his own heart: That whoso limited himself by them would never from his performance in duty understand any thing of the frame of his heart. And that no knowing person could have other need of them, than as a Supplement for his own laziness, neither studying the Scriptures nor his own Heart.* Whatever be determined as to her judgement in the case, her *Ladyship* for 15 or 16 years before her

death

death would not allow her self the use of them. She prayed much in her Closet, Thrice each day in Communion with us in the Family.

She was as diligent in *hearing the Word*, ordinarily hearing three Sermons on the Lords Day, and more Lectures in the Week-day, till her increasing distempers (of late years) more indisposed her. Her *Sabbath* day *service*, and the hearing of one *weekly Lecture* which her Ladyship at her own charge erected and maintained, she continued while she was able to go down stairs, yea and after that in her *Bed-chamber* to her dying day.

Once every month, she (in Communion with us) received the *Lords Supper*, and that not without *prævious preparation* before she came, and most *ardent devotion* when she was present at that sacred Institution. Of her private Fastings, and extraordinary times of Prayer, I shall say nothing, though in them she was not wanting.

Her *love* to the *Ministers* and *servants* of God was beyond comparison; she had not only (*like the Shunamite*) prepared a *Table, a Bed, and a Candlestick for the Servants of God who passed that way*, but (like *Lydia*) she would adjure them (if they judged her faithfull) to come to her house. To this purpose she had set apart one Chamber in her own house, to which she had given the name of *the Ministers Chamber*. She highly prized any *laborious Godly Minister*, and that for his works sake; and she had as little kindness for any

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who attended not their Work, or whose lives defamed their Doctrine, and Function, having nothing but the colour, and form of their Coat to make them known: she had indeed a peculiar kindness for some, but a *great love* for all, whom by any thing she could discern deriving from Christ, and dedicating their time and hearts to his service. So far as I could estimate it, she every year spent the fourth part of her Revenues upon *good Ministers*, and *poor Christians*. Her charitable acts were like that pious act of *Araunah*, of whom the Scripture saith, *As a King he gave unto the King*. What she did of this nature, she did nobly, and a very large heart and hand God had given her. How often hath *she lodged strangers, relieved the afflicted, washed their wounds* (instead of their feet) washing of which being not our guise? How *diligently did she follow every good work?* Her *Coach* was ordinarily seen waiting for her, at the doors of *poor* and mean persons, whiles others (like *Michal*) looked out at their *wanton Windows*, saw it, and mockt. It pleased her *Ladyship* when she came home to fancy what the wanton Gallants of the Town said, *How glorious was the Lady* Frances *to day, spending her time in Visits to poor Knitters?* She had an answer ready (with a small alteration) from *the man* according to Gods own heart, *It was before the Lord*, with such as he hath chosen to Eternal life, leaving *Vain persons* to perish in the recompence of their iniquity.

While

While others were measuring the ground with their idle feet, she (upon her *bended knees*) was taking her turns with God, and taking the heighth of the third Heavens: While they were discoursing of the *Mode*, in this or the other habit, she was discoursing with poor Christians upon *sick* and *Death-beds*, about the *long white Robe* of *Christs righteousness*; the *New Name*, the *white Stone*, the *Chains about the Saints necks*; while they were laughing, and pleasantly busied at their *Feasts*, *Balls*, and *Playes*, she was in her Closet, *mourning*, and offering up to God the *spiritual sacrifice* of *Prayers* and *Tears*, both for her self and them. She was of our Divine Poets mind, that *Kneeling never spoiled Silk-stocking*, nor *Gown neither*, and that Christian *Cottages* never dishonoured a more stately Coach. I have known some very mean Christians (but indeed of great grace, and great experience in the wayes of God) from whom lying on their beds of afflictions, she would hardly be two dayes absent; nor did she judge any time too long to spend with them. She would often say to me, that she believed *Love constrained equally* (if not more) *in spiritual Relations, than in those that were natural*; and when in her dark hours, she sometimes ran the fate of other Christians, wanting such evidences of Grace, as she desired to have found, she would from this relieve her self, that if St. *Johns Argument* were infallible, 1 *Joh.* 3. 14. *We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the Brethren*, she yet had a ground

of hope, for if her heart did not strangely deceive her, she *loved them*, and that *because of their holiness*, &c. nor was she any of those that said she had *Faith* or *Love*, and *had no Works*. None of those whom St. *James* reflects upon, Who *if a Brother or Sister were naked, and destitute of daily food*, would say to them, *Depart in peace, be you warmed, and be you filled, notwithstanding gave them not those things which were needfull to the Body*. Her love did not evaporate, and spend it self in an empty-handed Visit, or meer pitying of such as were in affliction, she many wayes refreshed their bowels, if she found their bodily distempers difficult, she would ordinarily send her own *learned Physician* to them (who himself was a *Luke* too towards such as feared God) if she found them under spiritual trouble, she would direct me to them: She would put her own hands to their wounds, send them dishes from her own Table, when she had been with them at any time like the good *Samaritane* in the Gospel, when she came away she would take out money from her purse, and give to Nurses, saying to them, *Take care of this person, and whatsoever you spend more, when I come again I will repay you*. Her self-denyal in all acts of piety, and charity to the souls and bodies of others, was the just admiration of all sober persons in the place where God had fixed her, for which she was universally honoured, even by those who were of far different complexions from her.

James 2. 15, 16.]

Nor was she at all *morose* in her converse. Her *piety* taught her *civility*, and *affability*, and a *readiness to do good to all*, though her delight (according to that of *David*) was in those whom she apprehended dear unto God; and she was (according to the Apostles direction) most abundant in *doing good* to those of the *houshold of Faith*. Though her Expences were great and noble, yet those upon her self were *mean* and *inconsiderable*: She cared not to be known by so *pitifull a badge of Honour as Costly Apparel*, but was far more ambitious, of purchasing to her self an *honourable report* from good works, which yet she did not to be seen of men, and was carefull as to the most of them, that they should neither be taken notice of in the doing, nor that any record should be left of them, her desire was to have praise not from Men but from God. *Laudes quia merebatur contempsit, & quia contempsit magis merebatur*: So little did she affect applause, that drawing her *last will* (at least the Preface to it) with her own hand whiles I had the liberty of my *publick Ministry*, she willing me to preach at her Funerals, added (as I remember these very words) *And I desire him to forbear all commendations of me, a vile sinfull Creature.* Thus did this *Noble Lady go in and out before us*, commending the holy wayes of God, not only to all in the house with her, but to all that dwelt round about her. Thus did she shine in her *Horizon*, she was not a *reed shaken with the winde*; not one carried about with every winde of Doctrine; Psal. 16. 3. Gal. 6. 10.

she was not a person known by her cloathing in *soft* and *costly rayment* (yet she had been no stranger to Kings houses) she was a *burning and a shining light*, and for many years the people of God, in the *City of Norwich*, rejoyced in her light, to say nothing of more extraordinary advantages, they injoyed at least three opportunities each week for hearing the Word of God at her *Ladiships* charge. *But she, according to the will of God had* (with *David*) served *her generation*, and her time now was come when she must *fall asleep*.

It must and may be owned (for she judged it no blot upon her honour) that she was a *Non-conformist* as to some *Modes of Worship* in present use; as well as to some *Doctrines* more now in credit than formerly: for the latter, she was beholden to her *Noble Father*, who (as it was said before) early prejudiced her against the *Arminian principles*, and for the former, she was wont to acknowledge it to those who had the charge of her tender years, who sowed those seeds, which afterwards brought forth this fruit, indeed nothing so prejudiced her against *forms of Prayer*, as her own experience of them. For the two or three last years of her life therefore, she restrained her self to those exercises of Religion, which were performed within her own walls, or in some other places not so publick. As to which she yet injoyed a great liberty, by reason of that honour which persons of all perswasions had for her. It was not the will of

God

God she should long survive that *liberty*, which was so precious to her. The Lords day next preceding the time when the *Act restraining* religious meetings took place, was (if I remember right) the last time she went down her stairs; I remember while I helped her in going up the stairs from her Chappell to her Chamber, that night she told me, *The Act would do her no prejudice, for she should never go down more.* This (as I remember) was about the latter end of *June*, or beginning of *July*, 1664. The *Dropsie* (her fatal disease) had three or four moneths before seized upon her, but death (by it) made such gradual approaches, that till that time she was able (without much disturbance) to walk up and down. That very night (as I remember) was the first time, that she complained of her leggs failing her to that degree, yet was her life lengthened out till the latter end of *November* following: Indeed her whole life was a time of Afflictions, through the valetudinarious condition of her Noble Husband; the loss of Children, and her own subjection to distempers, through *stubborn splenetick obstructions.* Nor was she for some years before without some prospect of *the death* by which she should dye, though it was a kind of death, which she above all others dreaded, and would often say concerning it, *Father, if it be possible let that Cup pass from me.*

The time of her last sickness presented us with no great variety of temper in her as to *her spiritual condition*: She kept on her course

of *Religious Duties* in her *House*, and *Chamber*, as formerly. Her work was done both as to this, and as to another life, her *House* and her Soul was set in order, so as she had little to do, but to sit still, and *wait for the salvation of God*, all the remaining dayes of her appointed time till her great change came. I do not remember that during her long sickness, she more than twice discovered to me any *conflicts in her Spirit*, though I constantly attended upon her, and as constantly inquired upon the frame of her spirit. She had *sown in tears* before, and had now nothing to doe but *to reap in joy*. Her death was a long time both by her self, and us foreseen in its causes, but as to the particular time we were a little surprized, when she thought the day of her change (in probability) at some distance, she lost her *sense* and speech, and after two or three dayes quietly *fell asleep* in the Evening upon the Lords day, *Nov.* 27. 1664.

Thus lived, thus dyed this *twice noble*, *Excellent Lady* about the 61 year of her Age. Possibly the *Noblest* Example of *Piety*, and truest Pattern of *Honour*, *Liberality*, *Temperance*, *Humility* and *Courtesie*, which it hath pleased God in this last Age to shew upon the Stage where he had fixed her.

A Woman indeed not without her infirmities (to assert that, were to discharge her of her relation to Humane Nature) but as they were of no *scandalous magnitude*, and the pro-

products of Natural Temperature, not of *Vitious Habits*; so they were so much outshined by her *eminent Graces*, and *Vertues*, as a curious eye would hardly take notice of them. In short, *None* ever lived *more desired*, nor died more universally *lamented* by all *sober persons* in that City, to which she related.

She was buried in a *Vault* belonging to the Family of her *Dear* and *Noble Husband* at *Blicklin* in *Norfolk*, *Decemb.* 1. 1664. therein paying her deceased Husband a last Obedience, who (as I have often heard her pleasantly say) made it his first request to her upon her Marriage-day.

PROV.

PROV. 31. V. 29, 30, 31.

Many daughters have done vertuously, but thou hast excelled them all.
Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised.
Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.

OUT *of the abundance of the heart* (saith our Saviour) *the mouth speaketh*, which argues every man in the best capacity, to discourse upon such Subjects, which have had the latest, and fullest possession of his thoughts; you know (I suppose) what hath made the latest, and deepest impression on my thoughts, I think I may say upon yours also. I mean the severe dispensation of God to us all in taking from us (to use *Solomon*'s expression) אֵשֶׁת-חַיִל. *A noble, vertuous* woman. An *elect Lady*, to use the Apostles phrase, A great *mother in our Israel*. Upon whose separation from us, who is there amongst

amongst us, *fearing the Lord, that is* not crying out; Ah! *my mother! my mother!* The *Chariots of Norwich and the horsemen thereof!* I have therefore resolved to make an *Excellent woman* the subject of my discourse upon this occasion; you have had her pattern in that noble example, whom now the Providence of God hath taken from us; you have her description in the text; *A woman fearing the Lord*: while I am discoursing the Excellency of the *woman* in the text, both absolutely, as considered in her self, and comparatively as weighed with others in the ballances of *Religion*, and *Reason*: I shall satisfie my self that as to our deceased friend, I shall fulfill the will of God in the close of my text, *Giving of her, the fruits of her hands and causing her own works to praise her in the gates.*

We reade of *Solomon*, 1 Kings 4. 32. that he spake *three thousand Proverbs*. Some of the principal of which are doubtless recorded in this excellent portion of holy writ. The notion of *Proverbs* must not be taken so strictly as we usually take it, but in a further latitude of sense as comprehending all *figurative speeches*, especially such as have in them ought of a *similitude*, (of which sort are many of these sentences) some therefore interpret משלי *axioms* or *remarkable sentences*, specially calculated for the regulating of our conversations. These *Solomon* repeateth as the *dictates of his parents* to him, Prov. 1. 8. He bringeth in his father speaking; *My Son hear the instructions of thy Father, and forget not the law of thy Mother.*

Nomine He. משלי *significatur* omnis *sermo figuratus. Mercer.*

ther. Now that he might shew, that that general admonition had an influence upon him, he in a great part of this sacred peice of holy writ, recordeth the *instructions of his Father*, and in the beginning of this Chapter he also *recordeth the Law of his Mother.* So this Chapter begins. *The words of King* Lemuel, *the prophecy which his Mother taught him.* Interpreters generally agree, that this *Lemuel* was *Solomon* (there was no King of the Jews named *Lemuel*). Nor need any stumble at the name, who wisely considereth, that at his birth, the Lord named him *Gedidiah*, which not onely argues him to have had another name beside that of *Solomon* (whether so many as some talk of I know not) but the import of that name is much the same with that of this in the text. That signified, *Beloved of God*, this may either be translated, *God is with them*, or *to God*, or *who hath God for his God*; as *Critical* writers have observed, The learned *Mercer*, rejecteth the first *Etymology* as *jejune*, yet it is owned by the *Hebrew Doctors*, and followed both by *Munsterus* and *Clarius*, &c. *Mercer* rejecteth it as onely significative of the time when *Solomon* ruled over Israel, while God was yet with them, before their Apostacy; either of the latter is probable enough, signifying, *either a man set apart for God*, or a man *who had God for his God.* Which by the way may controul the severe sentence, which some Popish Authors give against this excellent person as to his eternal state.

2 Sam. 12. 25.

Apud eos Deus Deo. Cui ei? Deus.

I conclude then, and that with the generality of Interpreters, that the former part of this

this Chapter, containeth *Solomons* repetition of some excellent *Maxims* instilled into him by his mother *Bathsheba*, which she fitteth to his future capacity of being *King over Israel*. Where by the way we may observe, *the advantage of good principles instilled into children in their youth*. They may in the heat and vanity of their youth, bury these instructions, but they often have a *resurrection*, and are afterwards to advantage remembred. They are like seed thrown under the clods, which upon the next kind showre will discover themselves. In this Chapter *Bathsheba* perswaded her Son *Solomon*,

1. *To take heed of two species of Luxury*, both of them such as persons under his circumstances are exceeding prone to offend by, in regard of the great affluence of the world upon them, and which have a very ill influence upon persons of that *Eminency*, not only with reference to their *bodily life* and *health*, but with reference to their publick duty.

The summe of this first Instruction, you have, v. 3, 4. *Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy waies unto that which destroyeth Kings. It is not for Kings, O* Lemuel, *it is not for Kings to drink wine.*

2. Secondly, She exhorteth him, *to the performance of those positive duties; which concerned him in his Regal Capacity*. The *execution of justice* and *shewing of mercy*, v. 8, 9. *Open thy mouth for the dumb, in the cause of all such as are appointed for destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.*

From

From the *tenth verse* to the end, is the second general part of the Chapter, where you have the character of a *vertuous woman*, whether these also were the words of *Bathsheba* (as some think) instructing *Solomon* her Son in the choice of a wife, and by him recorded for our *instruction*: Or whether they *Originally* be the words of *Solomon* from the pattern of his excellent Mother, describing a desirable woman (which is the opinion of others) is as unprofitable to dispute, as difficult to be determined.

You have the character of a *vertuous woman*, from the *tenth* to the *nine and twentieth verse*. In these last verses you have both the conclusion of that discourse, and also of this whole Book of divine *Aphorisms*. In it you have,

1. The *Elogium*, or *commendation of a vertuous woman*. *Many daughters have done vertuously, but thou hast excelled them all. Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord she shall be praised.*

2. Secondly, *An advertisement*, or *admonition to the world to take notice of her*, and to *honour her*, according to her *value*. *Give her of the work of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.* In the former part we have observable,

1. *A short description of an excellent woman.* There are many good women [*many that have done vertuously.*] Who then is this same excellent woman? who had made her self high, or to ascend above the rest, (as it is

in

in the Hebrew) עליה על כלנה. What is this *beloved* above another beloved? The text tells you, *A woman, the fear of the Lord*, we tranſlate it, *A woman fearing the Lord*. I ſhall anon take further notice of the *Hebraiſm*.

2. A Second thing which you have remarkable is *the order* or *method* which *Solomon* uſeth in commending of her; which is *per modum comparationis* comparing her with other women, and ſhewing her *Superlative excellency*, and in the words of the text, you have a double compariſon. The firſt of *perſons*. *Many daughters* (i. e. many women) have done vertuouſly, but *Thou* haſt excelled them all, or haſt aſcended, or lifted up thy ſelf above all, where you have

1. *A Conceſſion* in thoſe words; *Many Daughters have done vertuouſly*, he grants there were many, who in there kind had done worthily, and there was an honour due to them. 2. *A Poſition* aſſerting the ſupereminent excellency of this perſon; *But thou haſt excelled them all.*

Solomon ſpeaks of this woman, as *David* (his Father) of the ſword of *Goliah*; *There is none to it*. There is none to her, This is ſhe that is the *chiefeſt of ten thouſand*.

2. Secondly, you have *a Compariſon of adjuncts* from which perſons may be commended. *Vertue, Favour: Beauty* and the *fear of the Lord*. Concerning *Vertue*, or *Strength*, or *Riches*, or *Diligence*, (for all theſe things are comprehended under the term חיל)

he speaketh nothing at all diminutively; he only asserteth an excellency in the fear of the Lord above all these; they are as Starrs, ordinary Starrs that have their lustre, She as the *Sun* out-shining them all in glory. For the other two, he speaketh more diminutively of them. *Favour is deceitful; Beauty is vain*; so not worthy to come into any noble *Elogium*, of any person, (that indeed is not explicitly spoken, but necessarily understood) as you may gather from what followeth. But [saith he] *A woman fearing the Lord, she shall be praised.* It is a short elliptical speech, as much as if he had said, *but the fear of the Lord hath nothing in it will deceive*, but much that is of real and abiding worth, and that which maketh the person possessed of it truly worthy of honour and commendation.

The second part of the Text, I called *an Advertisement or admonition to the world*, to take notice of such persons, and to give them their due honour. *Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in the gates.* I shall little insist on that.

I intend not to discourse every *Proposition* into which the words of my Text might regularly be resolved. There are onely two which my eye is upon, which I think contain much of the will of God revealed in this Text, (other things in it will fall in more collaterally) they are these.

Of all persons (or) of all women, the person, the woman fearing the Lord, is the most excellent person, the most excellent woman. That Propos. 1.

Propos. 2. *That concerning such, it is the will of God that the fruit of their hands should be given them, and their own works should praise them in the gates.*

The *Demonstration* of the truth of the first *Proposition*, is what I intend for the chief subject of my discourse; something of the latter will fall in in the application of my discourse. This then is the Proposition.

Prop. *That of all persons, of all women in the world, that person, that woman, that feareth the Lord, is the most excellent person.*

Many (saith *Solomon*) *have done vertuously*: but *thou hast excelled them all*, thou hast made thy self to ascend above them all. *She shall be praised.* In the opening of this Proposition,

1. I will enquire into the true notion of the person here extolled, A woman *fearing the Lord*, or A woman the *fear of the Lord*, according to the Hebrew phrase (which as I shall anon shew you, is not without its *Emphasis*.) Thus I shall open the subject of the Proposition.

2. I shall indeavour to demonstrate *the Superlative excellency of this Person above others.* So I shall confirm the Prædicate, and under these two heads, I shall bring whatsoever I shall speak to the Proposition, before I come to the Application of it.

1. The first thing to be inquired is; Who is this woman *fearing the Lord*, אשה יראת יהוה. as it in the Hebrew, this I shall

shall open to you in three particulars.

In the Hebrew the *Abstract is put for the Concrete*, which argueth a great *Emphasis*. It is in the Hebrew very *Emphatical*, word for word, *A woman, the fear of the Lord.* Some think it a meer Ellipsis of the Verb Substantive, and to be expounded by *Cui est*, that is, A woman that hath *the fear of the Lord.* But others more probably think there is in this way of expression a special *Emphasis*, and that it signifieth an eminent degree of that *quality* or *adjunct*, which is so expresst, in the subject to which it is applied. A way of speaking very familiar to the *Hebrew* tongue. Thus *Haggai* 2. 8. Christ is called, *The desire of all Nations*; that is, eminently desirable. Thus a Shepherd is said to have been an *Abomination to the Egyptians*, *Gen.* 46. 34. that is, highly abominable; his employment such as the Egyptians above all others detest. So *Psal.* 140. 12. *Let not an evil speaker*, [Heb. a man of tongue] *be established.* Nor is it unusual in other languages. Thus in *Latine* we call one *Scelus*, that is eminently vile; in English we call one a *Beauty*, that is eminently Beautiful. So here, a woman, *the fear of the Lord*, that is, a woman *eminently fearing the Lord.* So that whatsoever qualities we shall find in Scripture expressed under this *common head* of *the fear of the Lord:* or whatsoever *actions* we shall find according to the phrase of holy writ expressed under that notion; this form of expression signifieth a person eminent for those *qualities*; or in those *exercises*; and the

Sæpius abstractum ponitur pro concreto, seu substantivum pro adjectivo, cum insigni Emphasi & energiâ. Glassius.

Hag. 2. 8.

Gen. 46. 34

Psal. 140. 12.

phraſe ſignifieth much more than an ordinary dread of God. To open this yet a little further:

1. There is *a natural dread of God*, which all creatures have, and the worſt of men are not without ſomething of it: For fear being in us a paſſion neceſſarily moving upon the apprehenſion of an imminent evil. As the infinite ſuperiority of God over his creatures makes every rational creature preſently apprehend it in his power to do it harm, it muſt neceſſarily dread him; eſpecially conſidering the natural conſcience of guilt, which every ſuch creature hath, expoſing it to the ſtroke of his juſt, as well as almighty Arm.

2. There is a *ſlaviſh fear of God:* ſuch the *Devils* have; they *fear and tremble* (ſaith the Apoſtle) this doth but gradually differ from the other.

3. There is a *filial, reverential fear of God*; like that wherewith the child feareth his Father. The Angels have a reverential fear of God, though they know themſelves confirmed in goodneſs, and in no poſſibility of offending him; yet they fear God with a *reverential fear*, ariſing from the apprehenſion of the *ſuperlative excellencie* of the great Creatour above the firſt-born, and moſt excellent of his Creatures. Thus the *children of God* fear him, and not only with a *reverential fear*, but with a *filial fear*; they fear leſt they ſhould offend him. This laſt is the moſt excellent *fear of God*. Now of it there are different degrees according to the different manifeſta-

tions

tions of the Spirit of God to his Saints and Christians in different proficiencies in grace. Now this way of expressing this excellent quality, signifieth; *One possessed of the most excellent kind of fear, and also in the most eminent degree.* And this I take to be the particular *Emphasis* and *Energy* of the term in this place.

2. *Secondly*, It is a known Rule in Divinity; *That words in holy Writ signifying any motions of the senses and affections; yea and of the intellectual part also, there used, must be understood not to denote only the particular acts of that sense or faculty which they properly express, but all the actions, and the deportment of the whole soul, and outward man also, which are any way directed by that sense, or regulated by that affection or passion, and our duty in order to it, or consequently from it.* Without the true understanding of this Rule, we shall not be able fully to comprehend the true sense of an infinite number of Scriptures. Thus it is said, *Psal.* 1. 6. (with reference to God) that *he knoweth the way of the Righteous.* The meaning is, he *loveth, approveth, watcheth over* the way of the righteous. Thus *Psal.* 16. *Thou wilt not suffer thy holy one to see corruption*; that is, to corrupt, to experience corruption. So *John* 8. *Abraham saw my day and rejoyced*; the meaning is, he *foreknew* such a day, he *believed* it, he *hoped for it* and *rejoyced.* So *Hearing* in Scripture often (indeed most ordinarily) signifieth much more than bare *hearing*, viz. *hearkening, attentive hearing, believing*

Verba sensus & affectum & effectum denotant.

Psal. 1. 6.

Psal. 16.

John 8.

lieving, *obeying*. So for words signifying *Passion*. Thus the *wrath and anger of God* in Scripture, when it is threatned, doth not only signifie Gods just will to punish, but also his acts of vindicative justice. *I will bear the indignation of the Lord* (saith the Prophet) *because I have sinned against him:* That is, I will bear those punishments which the wrath of the Lord hath brought upon me. So here. *The fear of the Lord* doth not only signifie an inward awe and dread of God caused by the Spirit of God, in the hearts of creatures, upon the apprehension of Gods *Majesty*, *Greatness*, *Power*, *Glory*, *Goodness*, or other *Attributes*; but it also importeth, all those *external acts*, all that *outward deportment* and *behaviour* which *naturally* flow, or which according to the divine rule should flow from that principle. So that the *woman fearing Jehovah*, *is not only she, who in the contemplation of the Majesty, Power, Greatness, Glory, Justice and Goodness of God, reverenceth and dreadeth him, carrying in her heart a continual awe of the great God of Heaven and Earth, which makes her heart and thoughts stoop and bow at the meditation or hearing of him* in consideration of that infinite *Majesty*, *Glory*, *Greatness and Power*, which naturally require that homage from *every reasonable nature*; *but also in the whole of her conversation, in all her actions, both before and towards God and men* (*in obedience to that principle of Religion*) [*Fear*] *exerciseth her self in all things to keep a good conscience void of offence*, not daring to do

any

any thing which may provoke this God to displeasure whom she thus dreadeth, and being exactly careful to do all things, which, and as he commandeth. This is the woman *fearing Jehovah*, so far as we have yet discovered her. But this is not all which this term importeth. Once more.

3. It is very ordinary, as in other Writings, *so in holy Writ*, by a figure called *Synechdoche*, to *express a part of a thing for the whole*. Look as the *Philosopher* saith of moral virtues, *Virtutes sunt concatenatæ*, the Virtue (like beads) are all strung in a chain; and none can properly be denominated virtuous, who in some degree or other hath not all habits of virtue. So I may say in matters of grace. The graces of Gods Spirit are in a chain too. *Thou hast ravished my heart, my Sister, my Spouse, thou hast ravished my heart with one of the chains about thy neck*, *Cant* 4. 9. A man cannot have one, but he must have all of them; nor from a single habit can any be denominated a gracious person, in regard of this concatenation of grace. It is ordinary in Scripture to find a gracious person expressed, *Synechdochically*; under the notion of one singular special habit of grace (especially *some one more principal operative habit*.) Now of all habits, there are none more operative than those of *Fear* and *Love*: None that take more hold on the souls, or whose influence upon it is more evident. Hence in Scripture it is very ordinary to find an holy, gracious, person expressed under the notion of *one fearing God* [or]

one that *loveth God.* Divines have obſerved, that the former is more common to the *Old Teſtament*, which gives account to the Church of God, under its *Pædagogical eſtate*, when the diſpenſation of the Covenant of Grace was more terrible, and the latter to the *New Teſtament*, where it is *more ſweet*. Thus the grace and godly converſation of *Obadiah*, 1 *King.* 18. 5. of *Job*, *Job* 1. 8. of the whole body of ſeverer profeſſors, *Mal.* 3. 16. is expreſſed, and ſo very frequently, and in the New Teſtament, where the diſpenſation is more ſweet and gentle, it is more ordinary to expreſs the ſame things, under the notion of *believing* and *loving*, 1 John 4. 21. *He that*
James 2. 5. *loveth God*, John 21. 15. *Simon Son of Jonas, loveſt thou me?* Jam. 1. 12. *To them that love him*, 2 Tim. 4. 8. *Thoſe that love his appearance.* So *Rom.* 8. 28. and in many other places. But yet though (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) *we be come now to Mount Sion, and we have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear, but the ſpirit of Adoption, teaching us to cry, Abba Father.* And (as the Apoſtle ſaith) *Perfect love caſteth out fear.* Yet thoſe texts muſt not be underſtood of an awfull, reverential fear and dread of God (ſuch as even the holy Angels have: Nor yet of that *filial fear of God*, which every child of God hath, and muſt carry with him even to the gates of Heaven; but only of *ſervile ſlaviſh fear:* for even under the New Teſtament we ſhall find the ſervants of God expreſſed under this Notion. A godly man in *Theſi* is thus deſcribed

ſcribed, *One that feareth God, and worketh Righteouſneſs.* So alſo *Act.* 13. 26. *Cornelius* in particular is thus deſcribed, *A man that feareth God:* and we ſhall find that the *fear of God* is ſo eminently neceſſary to the conſtitution of a *godly man*, that any wickedneſs (by warrant of Scripture) may be preſumed of thoſe that want it. *Abraham* thus excuſed himſelf to *Abimelech*, for his not truſting his people with his life, and the honour of *Sarah. I ſaid, the fear of God was not in this place.* And (on the other ſide) *Joſeph* gives this as a ſufficient ſecurity to his brethren, that whatever they feared, he would do them no wrong. *This do, and live.* For *I fear God.* So that you ſee it is but a reaſonable figurative way to expreſs *the whole of inherent grace*, under the notion of *The fear of the Lord*; and to expreſs the whole courſe, practice and exerciſe of godlineſs, under this ſingle habit or act as a common head; and this I think enough to have ſpoken for the explication of the ſubject in the Propoſition, and to give you the true notion of a *woman*, or a perſon *fearing the Lord*; or (as the *Hebrew phraſe* in the Text is) *The fear of the Lord.* It is in ſhort, An eminently gracious, godly woman: Or (if you will) you may take it more largely thus. *A woman, or a perſon, who being poſſeſſed of all the graces of the holy Spirit of God, communicated in regeneration, and being grown up to ſome degree of perfection in thoſe ſpiritual habits, eminently lives in a diligent caution, and taking heed of whatſoever is contrary to*

Act. 10.35. Act. 10.22. Gen. 20.11 Gen. 42.18

the holy will of God, and a diligent and exact performance of all those duties of an holy life and conversation, which those sacred principles command and produce, in obedience to the whole revealed will of God. This is the woman of whom this text speaketh. *The Woman, the fear of Jehovah.* Let me now come to the second thing, to inquire what is said of this person.

That which (in short) is said of her, is that she *is the most excellent woman:* There are many others praise-worthy in their order and kind; many to whom *sua laus debetur*; but there is none like unto her; she hath (to speak in the Hebrew dialect) *ascended above them all.* Others may deserve some praise, but *she shall be praised*; she in the most eminent manner deserveth praise. Two things then are said,

1. *She is the most excellent person.*
2. *She deserveth most true and eminent praise.*

The latter justly followeth upon the former. That therefore is it alone which I shall insist upon, and the general question is,

Quest. 2. *Wherein it doth, or may appear, that a woman fearing the Lord* (in this sense) *is the most excellent woman, that person the most excellent person?*

The commendation in the text being in the *superlative degree*, the most natural way to demonstrate the truth of the Proposition, is that which *Solomon* here directeth us to, *per modum comparationis*, comparing her with

with other women or persons to whom the world giveth praise or honour; and shewing you the excellency of her, and those perfections of which she is possessed, above all other persons of her order whom the world admireth and doteth upon; and above all those things, for which the mistaken world so admireth others. This therefore is the method which I shall follow, having the Holy Ghost himself for my guide. I will then

1. *Enquire what those things are, which as adjuncts to persons inhance their value, either really, or in the opinion of men, weighing them all in the ballance of reason and Religion, as I go along, and shewing you what there is of excellency in them.*

2. Secondly, I will shew you, *what there is in this supereminent quality* [The fear of th Lord] *which maketh it to out-shine all those other excellencies, even before any abatement of their value, and supposing them not subject to those accidents, which indeed they are subjected to, which will inforce a rebatement (in any reasonable soul) of what they are at first blush and appearance worth.*

3. Lastly, *I will consider both the one and the other in their dve circumstances, and so consider both the one and the other, substracting what either Reason or Religion will shew reasonable to be substracted from the appearing value of those other things:* And then I hope it will be easie for us to cast up the total summ of each, and by comparing them together, to judge of the truth of the *Proposition.*

1. As

1. As to the first, set aside what is here comprehended under the notion of [The fear of the Lord] all things which either in reality or in opinion do inhance the value of any person, may be reduced to three heads.

1. The *ornaments*, *perfections* and *accomplishments* of the *body*, which is our outward man.

2. *The endowments of the mind.*

3. More *external*, *accidental*, *forein advantages to our persons.*

I. The first head is, *The ornaments, perfections and accomplishments of our bodies.* There are *strength* and *beauty*, both mentioned in the text in the terms חיל & יפי the word חיל is a word of very large interpretation. Primarily, it signifieth *natural strength* and *courage.* Thence in Scripture it is ordinarily used, to express an *Army*, which is ordinarily made up of strong men. *Men of strength* (as the Hebrew dialect is) Thus *Gen.* 47. 6. If there be *amongst them any men of strength*, or activity (as we translate it; for activity dependeth upon strength) So *Jephthah* is called *A mighty man of valour.* Where the same word is again used, it is translated *Army*, *Exod.* 14. 9. *Jer.* 37. 7. 37. 7. It is true that amongst us *strength* doth not ordinarily fall into the commendation of the female sex, but you know of old, *Deborah* and *Jael* were renowned for this.

Gen. 47. 6.

Judg 11. 1.

Exod. 14. 9.

Jer. 37. 7.

Judg. 5.

2. *Beauty* is that bodily ornament which more ordinarily commendeth the woman; it lieth in the *perfection and proportion of bodily parts*, and in a *due mixture of colours proper to flesh and blood.*

But

But the *indowments of the mind* are things which yet further raiſe the value of any perſon. Theſe fall under three heads. 2.

1. *Knowledge*, which is the furniture of the intellectual part of the ſoul; the object of it is as large as Heaven and Earth, and all things contained in it. *Without knowledge* (ſaith *Solomon*, *Prov.* 19.) *the ſoul is not good*: without *divine knowledge*, not ſpiritually good; without *natural knowledge*, not morally good. Knowledge is a great ornament.

2. *Moral virtues.* Nobleneſs of ſpirit, *chaſtity*, *temperance*, *ſobriety*, *juſtice*, *mercy and pity*, *bounty and liberality*, *meekneſs*, *humility*, *affability*, *courteſie*. The woman indued with theſe and ſuch like habits, is far more excellent than her neighbour, that is *lewd*, *drunken*, *intemperate*, *ill-tongued*, *moroſe*, *immodeſt*, *&c.* This kind of excellency is expreſſed in the text under the term חיל which both in the text and *verſ.* 21. is tranſlated *virtue*.

A third thing is *activity of ſpirit*; when one is diſpoſed and ready for buſineſs; apt to manage affairs, and agile in it. Thus we tranſlate this word, *Gen.* 47. 6. If there be amongſt them, any *men of activity*. It is uſed, *Exod.* 18. 21. to expreſs the fit qualifications of Magiſtrates; we there tranſlate it able, *able men*; where certainly it ſignifies *knowledge*, *prudence*, and almoſt all *moral virtue*, together with *activity of ſpirit*. The woman of an *induſtrious*, active, diligent ſpirit and temper, is far more excellent than her who is of a ſlothful, crazy, idle temper, and

Gen. 47. 6.

Exod. 18. 21.

and this also is comprehended in the text under the term חיל as you may see by comparing *v.* 10. of this chapter with the following verses, the אשה חיל mentioned *v.* 20. is expounded by *Solomon* to be one that *seeketh wooll, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands; that riseth while it is night, and giveth meat to her houshold, and a portion to her Maidens.* This now is a second sort of things which raise the value of a person in the world.

3. The third and last sort I call *more external advantages*; such as are not inherent in our persons, but forein to us; and indeed alone signifie little or nothing to the commendation of a rational creature as such: These are,

1. *Noble Parentage and Relations*; to be born *atavis regibus*, of noble progenitors, related to great persons or families; these are some of those things which the Heathens called *good things of fortune*, and the Poet knew not how to call *Ours*,

——*Vix ea nostra voco.*

2. *Honours*; which are looked upon highly by many, but are things still without us, having their original in the favour of others.

3. The *Affection* and *Favour* of men, which begetteth a good and honourable name.

4. *Riches*, a *great estate in mony or lands*, &c. the word חיל often signifieth Riches,

Jer. 17. 3. Isa. 30. 7. *Jer.* 17. 3. *I will give thy substance* חיל *and all thy treasures to the spoil*, Isa. 30. 7. *They will carry*

carry their riches upon the shoulders of young Asses. Honours, credit and reputation are expressed under the other term in the text נשא often used in Scripture to express the favour of others to us. Thus the world accounteth him or her that is *rich*, *honourable*, in *credit* and *favour* with the world, more excellent than those that are of *mean parentage*, *mean estate*, or of *no repute* in the world. And thus I have given you a short account of the most of those things which raise the value of any person in the world, to which might have been added, *Wit* and *Fancy*, and *some noble vertuous actions*. The latter is mentioned in the text, *Many daughters have done vertuously.*

And indeed, though it be the great errour of the men of the world to over-rate these things; and because of them to set too high a value upon the person possessed of them; yet there is something of true worth, value and excellency in them; and they, (at least some of them) and some of them more than others) do confer something of excellency upon the person whom it pleaseth God to bless with them; *Solomon* himself yields it, when he saith in the text, *Many Daughters have done vertuously:* And that leadeth me to a further consideration, what there is of real value in these things, we shall find (if we wisely consider it) That the true excellency which these things have, and which they can confer upon the person blessed with them chiefly dependeth upon these things.

First,

1. First, *They are all of them the gifts of God*, though they be not of his choiceſt and beſt ſort of gifts, yet his gifts they are, and not the portions of all perſons. *That one is more nobly and ingenuouſly born*, is Gods gift, who breathed his ſoul into a finer piece of clay than anothers. He is our *Potter*, and they are his hands that have ſhaped *one body* into a more lovely and beautiful form than anothers, and hath knit the joynts of one more ſtrong than anothers. It is he that hath given to one a quicker underſtanding, a more dexterous wit and fancy, a more ſolid judgement, a more tenacious memory, a more active ſpirit than another. All this cometh from the Lord. It is he that hath more diſpoſed the mind of one than another to moral vertue, meekneſs, ingenuity, courteſie, ſobriety, &c. It is he that hath given to one more than to another favour in the eyes of Princes, and great perſons, or in the eyes of the common people. It is he that hath given to one a greater eſtate than to another; and by whoſe guidance and aſſiſtance one doth more noble and virtuous actions than another. *Promotion cometh not from the East, nor from the West, nor from the South, but God is the Judge, he pulleth down one, and ſetteth up another*, ſaith the Pſalmiſt, *Pſal.* 67. 6, 7. *Favour is not to men of skill*, Eccleſ. 9. God gave *Joſeph* favour in the *eyes of his Keeper*, and *the Iſraelites in the ſight of the Egyptians*. It were eaſie to ſhew you the Scripture ſpeaking the like concerning *Riches*, and other-

accor

accompliſhments of Nature, and gifts of Providence (ſo Chriſtians call them, acknowledging the donor of them) the Heathen called them the gifts of fortune, which they dreamed to be one of the four cauſes of all things, and made to be a God. Now I ſay, this putteth an excellency upon the things themſelves, and alſo upon the perſon poſſeſſed with them; whoſo hath them, hath more to ſhew for a favour that God hath to him, than he that wanteth them, unleſs he hath this ſame excellent thing in my text.

A *ſecond thing* which commendeth theſe, or ſome of theſe things, is, their *uſefulneſs as to our comfortable being and ſubſiſtence in this life.* *Riches* and *Favour*, though they be things more external and forein to what truly makes up a reaſonable creature, or adorneth him, conſidered in that capacity; yet they have this excellency in them, that whoſo is poſſeſſed of them, is at a better advantage than another man for a comfortable ſubſiſtence in the world, and to do good to others, than he that is poor, and of no credit and reputation in the world. *Strength* and *health of body* (upon which ſtrength you know much depends) are neceſſary and advantagious to us, for our comfortable ſubſiſtence. An *Active, buſie, diligent ſpirit*, is that alſo which maketh rich (through the bleſſing of God) and upon this account all theſe things have a true and real excellency in them, and ought to be looked upon as the bleſſings of God, which we ought to acknowledge 2.

and

and to receive with thankfulneſs at his hand.

3. Laſtly, There is an excellency in ſome of them, and which they give to the perſons that are poſſeſt of them, which lies in their *approvableneſs to the reaſonable nature of man.* All of them do not ſo approve themſelves to our rational part; reaſon underſtands not the excellency of great parentage, or a fair face, nor of riches, or honours, &c. But now *knowledge, prudence, ſobriety, temperance, modeſty*, with other moral virtues, are things which have in them a certain innate and connatural beauty, even reaſon being Judge, and make the perſon poſſeſſed of them as much to excite another that is *ignorant, immodeſt, impudent, intemperate, fooliſh*, as light excelleth darkneſs; and upon this account it was that the wiſer Heathens valued them, though they knew nothing of the revealed mind and will of God in reference to them, and conſidered them not at all as falling under a divine precept, but only as improvements of nature, and due products of a ſoul that had not loſt its reaſon, and was not metamorphoſed by debauchery. The Heathens had no other eye than that of reaſon; no other ballance than that in which to weigh things that differed.

And now I think we have made a juſt eſtimate of other things (the fear of the Lord only excepted) which either do, or may put a value upon any perſon in this world above his neighbour: we have ſeen what they are, and

and how much they signifie. The summ is this, That there are many things which either really, or at least in common opinion make a man or woman to excel; *Bodily perfections, strength, health, beauty; mental endowments, knowledge, judgement, wit, prudence; moral vertues, temperance, sobriety, &c. An active diligent spirit* and temper, fitted for businesse in our respective callings; *things more external,* such as *honour, estate, favour, credit* and *reputation.* And though it be very usual (as I have said) to over-rate these things, and to overvalue persons blessed with them, because of them; yet these things, considered as the gifts and favours of God, and as things of singular advantage to us, with reference to the comfortable beeing and subsistence of our outward man in the world; and as some of them are naturally far more approvable to the reasonable nature of man, than their contraries have some true, real worth and excellency in them; and persons possessed of them, may (in their degrees) be justly judged more excellent and valuable than those that want them. But the person *fearing Jehovah,* is yet the most excellent person. Others upon the aforementioned accounts, have *ascended,* (to use the *Hebrew* phrase) or do excel many others in the world: But the person that eminently *feareth the Lord,* hath (as the text speaketh) eminently *ascended above them all.* Amongst them all, there is none like to that person, and that brings me to the next thing which I promised you in the explica-

tion and demonstration of the Predicate of the Proposition.

Quest. 2. *What there is in this supereminent Quality* [*The fear of the Lord*] *which so raiseth the price of its subject, that the person which hath it, by reason of it, so much out-shineth others?*

In my former discourse I gave you the just value of all valuable things in the world (this only excepted) which make one person in the world considerably to differ from another in any degree of excellency, without making any rebatements, for the accidents, to which those things are subjected. I shall anon make that rebatement. My present work is, to rate *The fear of the Lord*, and shew you the true value of it.

In the general, I must say of it as *Job* hath
Job 28. 15. spoken before me; *Silver shall not be weighed for the price thereof; it cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious Onyx, or the Saphire. The Gold and the Chrystal cannot equal it; and the exchange of it shall not be for Jewels of fine Gold. No mention shall be made of Coral, nor of Pearls: for the price of wisdom is above Rubies; the Topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, nor shall it be valued with pure Gold.* Or in the words of *Solomon*, *Happy is*
Prov. 3. 13, *the man that findeth wisdom* (*Wisdom*, and
14, 15, &c. *Grace*, and *The fear of the Lord*, are much the same in the dialect of Scripture) *and the man that getteth understanding; for the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine Gold; she is more*

precious

precious than Rubies, and all the things thou canst desire, are not to be compared unto her. Length of daies are in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour. Her waies are waies of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a Tree of Life to all that lay hold upon her, and happy is every one that retaineth her, Prov. 8. 11. *All the things that may be desired, are not to be compared with her.* Prov. 8. 11. Left you should doubt what is meant by wisdom, *Job* expoundeth both himself and *Solomon*, *Job* 28. 28. *The fear of the Lord that is wisdom.* Job 28. 28.

But, left you should judge these empty words, blowing up a thing beyond its due value; let us but rationally consider *The fear of the Lord*, and the person blessed with it, and we shall find these were not vain words. I shall demonstrate to you the superlative excellency of this *spiritual quality*, and the person indued with it, if you please with me to consider these six or seven things.

1. *The particular fountain or spring-head from which it floweth.*

2. *The particular subject which it blesseth, or channel in which it runneth.*

3. *The excellent object to which it moveth.*

4. *The admirable end towards which it worketh.*

5. *The noble actions to which it principleth.*

6. *The admirable use of it, not only in reference to God and our selves, but also with reference to others in our political converse.*

7. *The train of good things which ordinarily attend it.*

I shall speak something to each of these in their order.

1. Let us first then consider *the particular fountain, or spring-head from which the fear of the*
Jam. 1.17. *Lord floweth.* The Apostle telleth us, *That every good and perfect gift cometh down from above, from the Father of Lights.* I told you before, that *health, strength, beauty, honour, riches, favour* with men; and those other things before mentioned, of a less valuable consideration, came from God. The Lord *raiseth up one*, and *pulleth down another. The blessing of the Lord maketh rich.* It is as true, and in a more eminent manner concerning
Jer. 32.40. *The fear of the Lord*, Jer. 32. 40. *I will put my fear into their hearts.* God is the Author of every good gift and thing, but in a different manner. Divines distinguish betwixt a more general love of God to his creatures, which they call his φιλανθρωπίαν, and his more special distinguishing love, which they call εὐδοκίαν. Not to dispute that distinction, it is most certain, that there is a *Will in God* freely to do good to the Sons and Daughters of men, which we call his *Love.* It is as certain, that this free and *just Will of God*, is not to do alike good to all; to some he willeth to shew some particular grace and mercy which he *willeth not to others.* Upon
Mal. 5.46. the first account, *He maketh his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall upon the just and unjust.* He leaveth not the Heathen without a testi-
Acts 14. mony of his love, giving them *fruitful times and seasons.*

From

From this fountain flow *riches*, *honours*, and all other *effluxes* of his goodness, which we call *the gifts of common Providence*. Divines rank them under the notion of τὰ βιωτικα, things for this life; yea and there are some τὰ πνευματικὰ, *spiritual gifts*, and *spiritual means*; such as *knowledge*, and the fruits of restraining grace (our natural endeavours only supposed) such are the habits of moral vertues; all these flow from the more general, common love of God. But now there are others flowing from a *special distinguishing love*, in reference to the spiritual and eternal advantage of our souls. From his *Covenant-love*; and such is this supernatural quality. *And I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them, to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall never depart from me.* Jer. 32. 4. Now this is enough (in the first place) to evince the excellency of the *fear of the Lord*, and the superlative excellency of the person possessed of it, above the value of such as are possessed of more inferiour gifts. Let us but argue rationally, and after the manner of men. If there be any excellency in the favour of a man; or if the collation of a mans favour, doth imprint any excellency upon the person upon whom it is bestowed; then certainly the more any one hath of that *favour*; or the greater and higher degrees he hath of it, the more he hath of excellency. The story is known of the Emperour, who displeased his Courtier

by giving him a *Ring*, when he gave another a *kiss*: what was he angry for? the Ring for use in the world, was more worth than a kiss. What use could be made of that? Oh! but the kiss spake an eminent degree of the Princes love, and so imprinted a greater excellency upon him that had it. When the Lord giveth unto any *strength*, *beauty*, *riches*, *honour*, they are but as so many *Rings*: But where he gives his fear, there he gives the *kiss*; and this speaketh a greater excellency in the fear of the Lord, and in the person blessed with it, than in any other thing, or person: the soul that hath this, hath indeed ascended above them all; in the favour of God that soul hath ascended above them all. As you see, the strength of this demonstration dependeth upon these two *postulata*.

1. *That the person in favour with God is upon that account more excellent than any other person that is not so.* And this is no hard thing to be granted by those who judge, that the favour of an earthly Prince, who is but a mortal man, doth give an excellency to the person blessed with it.

2. *That the greater degree of favour any soul hath with God*, the greater is his excellency; which easily followeth if the former be granted. This is the first thing.

2. But secondly, *Let us consider the particular subject which the fear of the Lord blesseth.* Or if you will, the *special channel* in which it runneth; or indeed the *capacity* in which it blesseth the soul. Take the most of the aforementioned

mentioned gifts, they only inhance the price and value of the outward man. *Beauty* is subjected in the surface of the body; *strength* in the nerves and bodily parts; *riches*, *honour*, *favour*, great *friends* and *relations*, they are indeed the gifts of God, and of great use and advantage; but the advantage of them is from their usefulness, to the well-being of the outward man, and the accommodation of a man in this life. Some indeed of the things aforementioned innoble the inward man; that doth *knowledge*, *prudence*, *moral vertue*. Some distinguish betwixt the *body*, the *mind*, and the *spirit*. The Apostle seemeth to allow that distinction, 1 *Thes.* 5. 23. If it be allowable, none of the things aforesaid (*the fear of the Lord* only excepted) reach further than the *mind*, that is, the soul of a man considered as a *rational substance*. Look upon the soul as a noble *immortal being*, under an ordination to an eternal existence in happiness or misery; and these things signifie little to it. A noble person may go to Hell. A rich and honourable man; a knowing prudent man; a comely, beautiful person, *may have their portion in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone*. Yea, and the Apostle saith, not many of them will go to Heaven; *Not many noble, not many wise, &c.* But now the most noble inward part of man; and that not considered only as a rational substance, but in its most excellent capacity, ordained to eternity, is the subject wherein this excellent quality resides. That which it blesseth. The price of the body is

1 Thes. 5. 23.

raised by strength, beauty, a good and healthy constitution. The price of the mind is raised by *knowledge, wit, judgement, memory*, and by *moral vertues*. But the value of the soul considered as a *spiritual being*, that is immortal, and under ordination to eternity, is raised *by grace*, by the *fear of the Lord*, and indeed by that only. This is that which marketh out a soul for Heaven, while another is left in the road to everlasting burnings. The seat of this *noble quality* is not the surface of the outward man, (which is the throne of that pitiful thing which the world so much doteth on) which we call (beauty) nor yet the bones, sinews, nerves of a man, which are the seat of *strength:* nor the *head of a man*, which is the seat of knowledge and prudence: nor the νους, the *rational part* of a man, which is the seat of *moral vertue*, where it sitteth as a *Queen*, and giveth Laws to *brutish passions*, and all *motions of the sensitive appetite:* But it is the *immortal soul* considered as a spiritual substance, and destinated to immortality and life, and an eternal existence. Now this *soul*, and thus considered, is the better part of man, man considered in his most excellent capacity; and whatsoever blesseth, adorneth, and advantageth the soul, considered in this notion, and under this capacity, must needs be more excellent than what only commendeth the body, which is but the outside of a rational creature, or the mind which a Pagan may have, in as good a condition as a Christian. As that house is the

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more *noble* and *excellent house*, which hath the beſt inſide, and where the rooms are beſt furniſhed; not that which hath nothing but a lofty *gay front*. So doubtleſs in the judgement of reaſon, that man or woman whoſe ſoul is ennobled with the moſt excellent qualities, is far more valuable than he or ſhe, who have nothing to commend them but a *well proportioned body*, or *an handſom face*, *Pro.* 11.22. *As a Jewel of gold in a Swines ſnout; ſo is a woman of beauty* (we may add *pari ratione*, a woman of *ſtrength*, *wit*, *parts*, *&c. without diſcretion*) *without the fear of the Lord.* The woman *fearing the Lord*, is *The Kings Daughter, all glorious within*: She is excellent in the moſt excellent part, and in the moſt excellent capacity. Others may have an excellent outſide; ſhe hath a moſt excellent inſide: Others may be painted Sepulchres; ſhe hath a moſt excellent ſoul: They have excellent limbs, and features in their faces; ſhe hath the moſt excellent qualities in her nobler and more inward part: They are (it may be) well accommodated for this life; ſhe is beſt prepared for eternity; therefore ſhe muſt needs *aſcend*, or be *liſted up* above them all. It is an uſual ſaying amongſt Philoſophers, *Animus cujuſque eſt quiſque.* The mind of the man is the man. It is much more true of the ſoul, conſidered in the capacity I mentioned. The bodies indeed of the Saints are called *The Temples of the Holy Ghoſt*; but it is by reaſon of the redeemed ſouls which inform them. The Holy Ghoſt dwelleth in the whole Pro.11.22.

whole person of the believer as his Temple. The body is but as the *Outward Court* into which common excellency comes; such as *strength, beauty, &c.* The *mind of man* is as the *Inner Court*, into which come a better sort of divine gifts; this is ennobled with *knowledge, prudence, &c.* and other habits of intellectual and moral vertues. But *the soul* considered in the capacity (before expressed) as a spiritual, immortal substance, is that part of man into which the Holy Ghost entreth, and which is as it were his throne: Here the fear of the Lord resideth, and maketh it truly excellent. I shall now conclude my second demonstration; *That is the most excellent quality, which ennobleth the most excellent part, and that in the most excellent capacity; and that is the most excellent person whose better and more excellent part is so ennobled and made excellent. But the fear of the Lord ennobleth the more noble and excellent part, and that in the noblest and most excellent capacity.*

3. Thirdly, The truth of the Proposition will appear, if we consider *the excellency of the object, to which this excellent quality moveth the soul, and for an union with which it prepareth it.* The force of the demonstration dependeth upon the principle, *That the more excellent any object is towards an union, with which any quality is subservient, and working, the more excellent that habit or quality is:* which is a principle so justifiable to reason, and allowed by common consent and judgement, that

that I need not insist on the proof of it. Take all other qualities or advantages which the creature can afford, they serve us no further than to the creature, preparing us for an union with that. For instance, *Beauty* is an amiable gift of God; but wherein doth it serve us? it indeed may commend the woman to an husband; but it will not at all commend her to Christ. *Wisdom* and *Knowledge* are *rare habits*, and prepare us for an union, and endearment to, and with wise and learned men; but they commend not a soul at all unto God. The like may be said of those other distinguishing excellencies before mentioned. But now this excellent habit, *The fear of the Lord*, commendeth the soul to the Creator, and prepares it for a glorious union with him who is the supreme good, and unquestionably the most excellent object. The beautiful, the knowing, the wise person may be abominable to God; a child of wrath, and abhorred by him; but in every Nation, *he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him* (saith the Apostle.) Reason teacheth us to judge those the most excellent persons in the world, who upon a just account are most approvable to the wisest and most excellent persons of the earth; and those things the most excellent which render any so acceptable upon this account (if there were no other, we should set a great rate upon *knowledge*, *vertue* and *wisdom*, above what we set upon beauty, and riches, and bodily strength, &c. because they

they commend us to the more judicious, rational, and wiser part of the world. By the like parity of reason (certainly) if we will but use our reason, and accordingly form our judgement, we must judge *the fear of the Lord* the most excellent quality; and the person who feareth the Lord, the most excellent person; he alone is the *Jedidiah*, the person whom God loveth, the soul whom God careth for. This, and this alone is that which commendeth the Creature to the Creator.

4. Fourthly, *That is the most excellent quality which directeth to, and prepareth the soul for the most excellent end.* There is an end to which the wise Creator hath ordained and designed every thing which he hath made: and there is an end which every rational agent propoundeth to it self in working: and there is an end or issue, which every thing will have. The great end of man in point of action, for which God hath created him, is *the glorifying of his holy Name.* The wise man saith, *God made all things for himself.* And the Apostle saith, *For him are all things.* God in working, worked for the best ends, cause he could work *for no greater*, wrought for himself. The Apostle saith of man particularly, *We are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God had before ordained that we should walk in them.* Mans great end in point of fruition and priviledge, is the *enjoyment of God here*, in the *influences of grace*; hereafter in the *beatifical vision* of his glory.

Eph. 2.10.

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There now are the great ends of man; the ends for which God hath created him, and which the wiser sort of men will propound to themselves. Besides these great ends of man, there are also some *little ends* of humane actions to which men direct much of their action; such as the obtaining of a comfortable beeing and subsistence in this life, &c. An end (though in it self considerable) yet exceeding little in comparison with the former, as every one will judge who hath but learned to compare *Time* with *Eternity*, and the soul with the body, and outward man. Take now all those other things before mentioned, as things either in reality, or vulgar estimation, raising the price of one mortal above another (this only excepted) the highest end they move towards, which they dispose and prepare the creature for, is no more than a sweet and happy beeing in this life, and that too, according to the various humours of men; as one fancieth happiness to lie in riches; a second, in pleasure; a third in intellectual, or moral virtue. Bodily strength and health are great blessings of God; but what further fruit do they bring forth, than what tasts well to a mortal pallat? what do they signifie more, than that such as are blessed with them, pass the time of their mortality with less pain, sorrow and trouble, than those that want them? *Beauty* is an amiable gift; but hath it any further influence upon mans felicity than this, that whoso are blessed with it, stand in a nearer

capacity

capacity to some creatures favour than others, more deformed and uncomely, to whom being united by marriage, or some near degrees of affection, they shall (probably) in the world have a life of more content, pleasure, and outward satisfaction, than others who are not under so lovely circumstances. Come from them to the indowments of the mind; *knowledge, prudence, a diligent, industrious, or active spirit, &c.* and indeed what ever else can be named (this fear of the Lord only excepted) they neither direct the soul to its best and noblest end; nor any way prepare and dispose it for the obtaining of it unless in a very remote capacity. What's the issue of *knowledge, wisdom*, but this, that the persons thus far blessed, stand upon better ground to live in the world than other men, as well in regard of the satisfaction these habits give to the mind, as of the light that ariseth from them to direct a mans converse, and the usefulness of such a person unto others. The same might be said of moral vertues, *Riches, Honours, great Relations, &c.* They none of them look beyond this life, nor contribute any thing to an happiness beyond it. Nay, it were yet something, if they perfectly blessed a man, so long as he is circumscribed with the limits of time and mortality; but how little do they, if I shall evidence they come short of this? than which there is nothing of more easie demonstration. For to us who are Christians, there's something more required even to such an happiness, than an

affluence

affluence of worldly contentments. We know and believe that there is a God, that this God is the chiefeſt good, and conſequently (building upon the rational principle of all Philoſophers) we conclude that happineſs even on this ſide of Heaven, muſt lie in the enjoyment of this God; having an intereſt and portion in him; nor can any aſſent to principles of reaſon above Atheiſm, but his reaſon will inforce his ſubſcription to this; for if he believes there is a God, he muſt acknowledge him ſupremely good; and his reaſon will tell him, happineſs muſt needs lie in an union with the higheſt good. The Heathen Philoſophers indeed, having not the light of divine revelation, according to their various humours (not knowing of any poſſibility of enjoying God) judged *pleaſures*, *riches*, *honours*, *knowledge*, *vertue*, to be *the greateſt good*, and conſequently mans happineſs to lie in the fruition of them. But we, though our common ſhare in reaſon with them, enforceth us to agree with them in that main principle, *That mans chiefeſt happineſs muſt neceſſary lie in his union to, and fruition of the greateſt good.* Yet being further enlightened, cannot agree with their notion of that good; for although they had their dark notions of a divine beeing, yet the poſſibility of a creatures union with God through Chriſt, Gods in-dwelling in the ſoul, the having of God for their God, reconciled in Chriſt, were things which *Ariſtotle* and *Plato* never dreamt of: But we having, by the light of the divine Spirit, made theſe diſcoveries,

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even their reasonable principle, enforceth us to conclude, *That the highest enjoyments and happiness of man even in this life, must needs be his union with, and enjoyment of God.* His being made partaker of the *Divine Nature*, and *transformation into the Divine Image*. So that all those other things do not reach so much as this end, the happy being of a man in this life; for we all know it is possible that men and women may have *strength*, *beauty*, *knowledge*, *prudence*, *wit*, *great relations*, *riches*, *honours*, *&c.* and yet enjoy nothing of God, but be at infinite distance from him, whom we acknowledge the supreme and chiefest good. But now this excellent habit, *The fear of the Lord*, doth both evidence our present union with God, and his special favour to us; and also it worketh us up to further degrees of union and communion with him.

But further yet, we who are Christians, are taught to look beyond this life, to consider our selves as *creatures under an ordination to a certain Eternity*, either *in happiness* or *misery*. We know that our souls are immortal substances, and will not, as the sensitive souls of beasts when they die, evaporate into air: Hence we are concerned to consider wherein the happiness of a soul in its state of separation lyes; and believing the Scriptures, we cannot but believe that even *these immortal bodies* shall in the *Resurrection* put upon *immortality*, these *corruptibles incorruption*, and so are concerned further to inquire

inquire wherein the happineſs of the ſoul and body lies in its ſtate of reunion. Here again we cannot but with the Philoſophers agree, that it muſt needs lie in an union with, and an enjoyment of the beſt and chiefeſt good, which the holy Scripture calleth, *A ſeeing of God as he is; knowing him as we are known; being ever with the Lord:* In one word, *Eternal life.* This now our reaſon naturally working upon Scripture hypotheſes, inforceth us to believe: and that this is the nobleſt and higheſt end of man as to priviledge, to which it is but reaſonable that he who knoweth it, ſhould direct all his actions. Now let us conſider all thoſe other pretty things, and ſee what they ſignifie with relation to this end. The ſtrong man, the beautiful woman, the knowing, the prudent and politick perſon, may all of them go to Hell: the morally vertuous perſon may be for ever excluded the Kingdom of God (that *righteouſneſs exceedeth not the righteouſneſs of Scribes and Phariſees.*) The Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 1. 26. ſpeaking of thoſe whom God hath choſen, ſaith, *Not many noble; not many wiſe after the fleſh; not many mighty; but God hath choſen the fooliſh things of the world to confound the wiſe. The poor of this world hath God choſen*, ſaith St. *James.* Could you look into the black dungeon of infernal ſpirits, where miſerable ſouls are reſerved in chains, unto the further judgement of the great and terrible day, you would ſee there many a *Goliah*, whoſe ſtrength could not reſcue him from the potent arm of divine

Justice. Many a *Thais*, whose beauty, instead of commending her to those eyes (which see not as man sees) rather betrayed her into that miserable pit. Many a Prince and Emperour, who knew not God, nor obeyed the Gospel of the Lord Jesus. Many a cunning *Achitophel*, whom God took in his craftiness. Many an ingenuous Atheist; many a rich *Dives*; but amongst them all, you would not find one single man or woman, that in this life feared the Lord. No, *Prov.* 3. 18. *Wisdom is a tree of life to them that lay hold on her.* All those other notes of distinction make some difference betwixt one creature and another as to this life; but as to the noblest and highest end of man, the blessed and happy enjoyment of God to all eternity; nothing but grace, nothing but the fear of the Lord makes any difference at all; without this, all persons, noble and base, rich and poor, beautiful or deformed, knowing or ignorant, witty or heavy, prudent or fooliſh, vertuous or vitious, will go to the same place of torments. This therefore must be the most excellent habit; and the person possessed with it, the most excellent person, because leading to, and prepared for the most noble and excellent end.

5. Again, the fear of the Lord will appear to be the most excellent thing, and the person possessed of it, to be the most excellent person; if we consider *those noble actions to which the soul is by this principled.* Humane actions are ordinarily divided unto such as are *natural*

such;

such as *eating, drinking, &c. moral, and civil, or political*, such are the works of our callings, giving to every one their due, living soberly and temperately, &c. and *such as are Religious*, which are our actions of homage to God: of these now the second are more noble than the first; and the last the noblest of all. Again, as to our religious actions, they are either more imperfectly, or more perfectly such. I call those more imperfectly such, which indeed are so *as to the matter of the act*, but not *as to the manner or form of the performance*; so *prayer, hearing the Word of God, &c.* But these are not so in a perfect and true notion, unless performed from a due principle, in a due manner, and to that due end which God hath commanded. Now those are our most noble and perfect actions, which are religious in the most proper and perfect sense; and to those, this excellent quality, *The fear of the Lord* principleth the soul. Others do but dispose and fit the body or mind for *natural or moral actions, strength, bodily activity* do no more, no more do *knowledge, prudence*, or the *habits* of moral vertues; or if some of those other things do dispose and principle any to religious actions; yet it is but to such actions more imperfectly considered. It is true, knowledge is an excellent thing, and hath its use, not only in fitting a man for greater perfections in natural and civil actions, but also for religious services; it prepareth men for prayer, hearing the Word, &c. and the habits of *moral vertues*

prepare men for *vertuous actions* commanded in the word of God, and which are to be performed in obedience to the command of God; but now *Grace*, the fear of the Lord disposeth, and prepareth the soul for the most perfect *performance of religious duties*; such as are truly religious in all circumstances, so as they shall be acceptable unto God. Every one who *giveth to the poor*, or *doth a just action*, doth not that which is acceptable to God; but he alone who doth those things from a *principle of faith*, or *in the fear of God*, and *in obedience unto God*, doth that which God accepteth. So saith *Peter*, *In every Nation, he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him*. Every one that worketh righteousness, from *the fear of the Lord*, principling his soul to such righteous acts, is accepted of God. So as this fear of the Lord upon this account, is the most noble and *excellent habit*, as it principleth the soul to its most noble acts, and to the truest and most perfect performance of them; being that without which (as the principle) it is impossible a soul in its highest acts of devotion should please God. The *vertuous actions* of men; yea, the *religious actions* of formalists devoid of this principle, are no better than *splendid sins* (as *Augustine* called the moral of the Heathens) so that by the same reason that we judge, *knowledge*, *prudence*, or any other intellectual or moral habits, more excellent than other *ornaments* of a man, as fitting and disposing persons for more noble

and

and brave actions. We must also judge *The fear of the Lord* more excellent than them all, because it further ennobleth the soul, preparing and disposing it yet to and for more brave and excellent acts, as such whereby we most answer the end of our creation in glorifying of God, and wherein, or in the performance of which in such manner as this directeth, we are acceptable unto God.

6. But let us further consider this noble and excellent quality, *in the aspect which it hath upon us*, not only in the performance of our duty to God, under which respect we have already considered it; but *in the influence which it hath upon us* in our civil and politic converse with men. *David Psal.* 16. 3. calleth *the Saints which are in the earth the excellent.* Indeed they are so, and that not only as *Saints*, as *persons* prepared for God (as the word קדושים from קדש translated Saints in that place seems to import) but also upon a rational view, and a truly civil and political consideration. Persons *fearing the Lord*, have not only the best souls, and are not only best considered in themselves, and in reference to God, but they are also the *best neighbours*. This will appear to you upon the digesting these two considerations.

1. *That the Word of God considered as a systeme of precepts fitted for the maintaining of humane society, is the most excellent body of such political precepts, with all possible advantages of comfort to such as are engaged as correlates in such societies.*

2. Secondly, (which I told you in opening the ſubject of the Propoſition) *That the perſon fearing the Lord, is a perſon who having the dread of God upon his heart, exerciſeth himſelf in a ſtrict obſervance of the Divine Law, in all things to keep a good conſcience both towards God and towards man.*

1. The firſt is a moſt demonſtrable truth; take all the Laws of the wiſeſt Nations and Law-givers that ever were in the world, pick out the beſt of thoſe of the *twelve tables at Rome*, amend what is deficient there by thoſe of *Solon* and *Licurgus*, refuſe *Juſtinians Code*, Search all the bodies of Laws in the world, and out of them all make one *Syſteme*, one body of political and domeſtick precepts; it will not prove ſo fitted for the comfortable and advantageous living in humane ſociety, as the Law of the Lord contained in the holy Scriptures is. I durſt appeal to the reaſon of a *Cato* or *Ariſtides* in the caſe. Let but any perſon out of the Book of God, draw out thoſe precepts which it hath given concerning Magiſtrates and Subjects, *Husbands and Wives*, *Parents and Children*, *Maſters and Servants*, or any political *συζυγια*. Then let him but ſuppoſe ſuch a City in the world, where within doors, all Parents and Children, all Maſters and Servants, all Husbands and Wives lived exactly according to thoſe Rules, and *without doors*; the Publick Magiſtrates, and the people governed by them, the Miniſters, and their reſpective flocks, neighbours and friends, behaved themſelves each to other according

according to those prescriptions, and let him fancy if he can, and soberly tell me if he can, what could be wanting, to the beauty, honour, and comfortable living of such a society. So true in this case also is that of *David*, *Psal.* 19. 7, 8. *The Law of the Lord is perfect. The Statutes of the Lord are right.* It were easie to demonstrate this in particular, were it not too large a digression.

Now I say in the second place, *That a person fearing the Lord, is one who doth exercise himself in this, in a strict observance of the Divine Law, to keep a conscience void of offence, both towards God, and towards men.* Whence it must necessarily follow, that the fear of the Lord is the most excellent quality, and the person fearing the Lord the most excellent person, considered in a political, as well as a religious capacity. The best neighbour, husband, wife, parent, child, &c. as well as the best Christian. Let us but use our reason a little. Is not that man or woman best prepared to, and fitted for humane society, who is *under the highest obligations imaginable, To do no kind of wrong to another; To give to every one his due, and that in every capacity, and as he hath occasion; even to his enemies, and to the worst of men, without any respect to his particular prejudices, to do all possible good*; and who accordingly so liveth, so walketh? The person fearing God,

1. *As to these things is under the highest imaginable obligations.*

2. *Thus he walketh, thus in a great measure*

be liveth, giving ſtill allowance to humane infirmities.

1. I ſay firſt, he is as to theſe things *under the higheſt imaginable obligations*. This will be evident to you, if you will conſider, that the Law of the Lord (which he owneth as his only Rule) requireth theſe things at his hands, that this Law is not only in his eye, but in his heart; that he ſtands obliged to the performance of it, under the fear of the greateſt terrours (ſuch the terrours of the Lord are) and under the incouragement of the largeſt promiſes, and upon the higheſt principles of ingenuity. A man or woman not fearing God, may be under obligations *to do no man wrong; to give to every one his due; to do good to others, &c.* But I pray, what are his obligations? Let us weigh them apart, and conſider them with the obligations to the ſame things, which are upon the hearts of perſons fearing the Lord; and who have in them this ſame principle.

1. Others may be under *the obligations of humane Laws*; and bleſſed be God for them; to them we are beholden, that there are in the world no more *murthers, theſts*, and other *diſorders*, to the utter confuſion of humane ſociety. Men are afraid of the Ax, the Gallows, &c. But alas! what is the force of theſe, compared with the terrour of *everlaſting fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels?* If he be under an obligation to avoid theſe enormous diſorders in *humane ſociety*, who is only awed from them with the fear

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of a *Gaol* or *Gallows?* what is he, think you, who is afraid of being tormented in *Hell* by the wrath of God to all eternity? *Where the worm never dieth, and the fire never goeth out?* It is true, there is the same obligation upon him that *feareth not God*; he is in danger of Hell fire; but it is the person *fearing God* who alone firmly and fixedly believeth any such thing. Others, if they do not laugh and mock at such things; yet very faintly assent to Propositions of such a nature.

2. Obligations may lie upon others to just and vertuous actions, *from the rational beauty and comelineſs of a juſt and ſober converſation, above one which is lewd and debauchd.* Until reason in man be out-lawed, and beastly passions and affections have perfectly subdued it, moral vertue will commend it self to humane nature. But what is the force of this obligation, compared with the *Will of God* to that man, who hath said, the Lord shall *rule over him?* Or to the apprehension of a *Conformity* (by such actions) to *Jeſus Chriſt*, to him to whom Christ is precious, who hath avowed Christ to be his Master, and assumed to be his Disciple. What is this obligation to the consideration of a gracious man, that these are the *fruits of the Spirit* which he hath received, and in which he standeth obliged to walk, and that the contrary acts are the *fruits of the fleſh*, which he standeth obliged to *mortifie*: which if he so much as *favours*, they will argue him *to walk after the fleſh*, and conclude him liable to condemnation,

as

as having no interest in Jesus Christ. The *gracious man* does not these things, because reason only approves them; but because *God hath commanded*, and because *God doth approve* them, because they are the Will of God concerning him, because Jesus Christ (while in the flesh) *so walked, setting him an an example, &c.*

3. Thirdly, Others may have obligations upon them, to do some such things from *good nature*. Some naturally are of more sweet and ingenuous natures than others are; more naturally inclined to *justice, pitty, mercy*; and this obligation worketh very high where it is found. But alas! what is this to his obligation, who hath these things as branches of the Law of God ingraven upon his heart, and that in that deep sculpture which the finger of the holy Spirit useth to make? to his who hath a *new name*, yea and a new nature given to him; and from that new nature, acts according to the prescript of *Divine Law freely and ingenuously*, not from constraint. *Luther* sometimes said of such a one, *Justus non debet bene agere, sed bene agit.* A passage that had need of a candid interpretation; but thus far true, That a man or woman truly *fearing God*, is not so much constrained by the force of a Divine Law (in which sense it may be the Apostle saith, that *the Law is not made for him*) as compelled by his *new nature*, and the generous principles of the new creature; his nature is quite altered; the things which he hated, he now loveth; and what

what he formerly loved, he now abhorreth.

4. Again, a man or woman not fearing God, may be under some obligations to just and vertuous actions, which may make him a good neighbour. From *Honour*, obedience to Governours, *Courtesie* to some who have done him a kindness; or an ingenuous nature abhorring to do wrong to such as have done him none. But alas! what are these, compared with the *honour* of maintaining the repute of a Christian, of a child of God, who is concerned to walk unblameably, as a Spouse of Christ, which must be presented *without spot and wrinckle*, who is pressed to these actions from a far higher ingagement upon his *ingenuity*, as they are the prescripts of that God, who hath loved him with an everlasting love; of that dear Saviour, who hath not loved his life for his sake. *I* (saith he) *must love mine enemies; do good to them that hate me; bless them that persecute me; and pray for them who despitefully use me.* Thus I shall be *like my Father which is in Heaven.* Thus I shall fulfil the *Royal Law of Love*, under which my Saviour hath laid me. I cannot say, *I love him, if I do not keep his Commandments.*

5. One not fearing God, may be principled to some such actions, *from some hopes*, either *from some particular friends*, who (if he behave himself vertuously) will do well by him; make him their heir, or for some hopes of *honour*, *credit* and *repute* in the world; and these things oft-times go a great way. But how much greater is the obliga-

tion

tion to these things, under which a gracious soul is from his hopes of the injoyment of God here, and the blessed fruition of him in the beatifical vision hereafter? These are the hopes of a person fearing the Lord; how infinitely higher than all earthly hopes, of what nature soever? What are all the hopes in the world laid in ballance with them? how much lighter than vanity? I will add but one thing more.

6. A person not fearing the Lord, may be ingaged to the doing of these things, *from some Law that he hath laid upon himself, some Oath or Promise.* But what are these to the correspondent engagements of this nature, which are upon the hearts of all truly fearing the Lord. To say nothing of the *Baptismal Engagements*, common to others with them (though better remembred by such as have not received the grace of God in vain) or such as they have renewed in their daily prayers, in sicknesses; or so oft as they have come to the Lords Table. What think you of that great engagement to these things (amongst others) which every one *fearing the Lord*, taketh upon him in the day when the Lord calleth him *out of darkness into marvelous light*, and putteth his Spirit into him. There is no obligation like to this; and reason it self will tell you so. For by how much the reason is greater upon which the promise is made; by so much usually the obligation arising from it doth more constrain. God in the day when the soul accepts and layeth hold

hold upon the Covenant of God, ſaith to the ſoul, *I am thy God, and the God of thy ſeed; my Chriſt, is thy Jeſus; my Son, thy Saviour*; only *walk thou before me, and be thou perfect.* The ſoul replies, *My God, I bleſs thy Name; I own thee as my God; I accept this Chriſt as my Saviour, and as my King and Law-giver, as well as my Prieſt, and Redeemer.* After this ſolemn ſtipulation betwixt the Lord and his ſoul, he finds amongſt the Laws of Chriſt; *Defraud no man; owe nothing to any but this, that you love one another. Love your enemies.* And many more moral and political precepts, he is certainly under the higheſt imaginable obligation to do theſe things which are contained in the Book of the Divine Law, and which do unqueſtionably (if duly performed) make him that doth them excellent in all his moral capacities, whether *Political* or *Oeconomical.* But

2. Secondly, *As every man fearing God is under the higheſt imaginable obligation to do theſe things; ſo in a great meaſure he doth them, giving an allowance to humane frailty, (for who liveth and ſinneth not againſt God?)* But unleſs a man in theſe things *aimeth* at his duty: unleſs he ſets his heart and his hand to it, the notion of one fearing the Lord, as I opened it to you, will not agree to him. I am not ſpeaking now of ſuch as mock the world with vain ſhews, and meer appearances of Religion, when in the mean time they are but painted Sepulchres, full of filth and rottenneſs; but of one truly fearing God (which none

none can do, *who hath not a respect to all Gods Commandments.*) I say, such a one, take him with all his failings, is a most excellent person; and that not considered only absolutely in himself, and relatively towards God; but considered also as a neighbour, and one truly fitted for politick society. Such a one may have his errours and deviations from the avowed rule of his life; either from ignorance, or mistakes of his duty; or from particular passions, or unusual and impetuous temptations; but take him in the whole course of his life, in his relative capacity, he is the most excellent person. *Murthers, quarrellings, private revenge, thefts, intemperance, drunkenness, uncleanness, cheating, defrauding, oppression, lying, perjury, false witnessing, evil speaking, reviling, malicious practices.* (The great things which disorder humane societies) are inconsistent to such a degree with his principle, that he stands obliged to abstain from the appearances of them, and to hate the garments spotted with them, and not to allow them a room in his most secret thoughts. Whence by the way you may observe, how unjust prejudices, and evil reports by a sinful world, are taken up, concerning the right waies of our God. There is nothing of ill neighbourhood can be charged upon the principles or professions of those that walk according to that sacred Rule. If any have called themselves *Jews*, which are not indeed so: Or if any who *have not the root of the matter in them*, have stumbled and fell, and

and given those who have watched for their halting occasion thus to blaspheme, let them bear their own burthen; In the mean time, let an holy God and his waies be discharged from any such imputations. The fear of the Lord still remains most excellent; the most excellent principle of *moral* and *political actions*; and whoso truly feareth the Lord, is, and according to all true principles of reason must be concluded, even as to these things, to be the most excellent person, *Do this and live* (saith *Joseph*) *for I fear God.* I durst not abuse you; I dare do you no wrong, for I fear God; and though this were sufficient to have said, yet considering what advantage the peevish world hath alwaies taken from the miscarriages of individual profession, to charge profession at large; I shall but offer this further demonstration for the stopping of every mouth. Let any one proportion any number of inhabitants in any place, to the number of those in it whom it may be the world in reproach calleth *Puritanes*; those I mean who profess to *Religion and Godliness*; and observe, in which number in a few years, he findeth most blots, and confessed irregularities of life (political life) from that very Rule, which reason it self dictates to be most comely and honest betwixt *political relations*; which every one must own to be a fair trial of the matter in issue. A particular professor may *erre*; and in that white society, one blot makes a great shew, especially advantaged by the worlds prejudice,

and

and the eagerneſs it hath againſt them to find ſomething whereof to accuſe them; but if you compare their number, and errours, with the like number, and the diſorders of others, it will be enough to recover your reaſon to a juſt opinion of them.

7. Laſtly, *It will appear, that men or women fearing the Lord, are the moſt excellent perſons, if we conſider the train of bleſſings and good things which the fear of the Lord bringeth along with it to the heart and houſe of thoſe in whom it dwelleth.* It is a way of reckoning which the world hath taken up, by which to rate the excellency of perſons from ſuch eminent favours, as Princes or noble perſons have beſtowed on them; and certainly it is good upon a ſuppoſition, either that Princes are the moſt judicious of men, ſo as they can leaſt erre in miſplacing their honours; or that an higher hand of God doth direct them (both which failing) poſſibly the judgement of excellency from this foundation is but erroneous (though only reverſible *in foro Cæli.*) Thus we judge the *Duke* more excellent than the *Earl*; the *Earl* than the *Baron*; the *Baron* than the *Knight*, &c. Their excellency lies in this, that the *Prince* hath delighted to honour them; they are his *Councellors*, his ſubordinate Magiſtrates. Others poſſibly may be found as learned, as vertuous, &c. but in this they have aſcended. The *Prince* (who is the fountain of honour) hath conferred moſt honour on them.

What ſhall we then ſay to the men and women

women whom the *Lord of Lords, the King of Kings, the God of Heaven and earth* hath delighted to honour; and that not with the titles of *Dukes, Earls, &c.* but with the title of his Sons. *To as many as received him, he gave a right to be called the Sons of God. What manner of dignity is this?* (saith the blessed Apostle.) Christ is not ashamed to call them *Brethren*; they are all *Kings and Priests to the most high God*. Though their Kingdom (like their Lords) is not of this world. And as they are the persons whom the Lord delighteth to honour; so they are those whom the Lord hath delighted to bless; he hath blessed them again and again; yea and they shall be blessed, *Psal.* 112. 1. *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord*, v. 2. *His seed shall be mighty on the earth*, v. 3. *Wealth and riches shall be in his house.* Again, *Psal.* 128. *Blessed is he that feareth the Lord.* v. 2. *Thou shalt eat the labour of thy hands; happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee; thy wife shall be as a fruitful Vine by the sides of thy house; thy children like Olive plants round about thy table. Behold thus shall he be blessed that feareth the Lord.* In short, this *fear of the Lord* is the same with what the Apostle calleth *Godliness*; of which he saith, that it is *great gain; having the promise of this life, and of that which is to come.* It is the same with *seeking the Kingdom of Heaven, and the righteousness thereof*, *Matth.* 6. 32. as to which the promise is made ——*and all other things shall be added unto you.* It is true, such are the mysterious dispensations

1 Joh. 12.
1 Joh. 3. 1.
Psal. 112. 1, 2, 3.
Psal. 128. 2.

of infinitely wise providence, that we do not see all these things falling out to be the particular portion of every one truly fearing God in this life; but the promise of these things is theirs; and he who hath promised they shall find both *able* and *faithful*; only they must also allow him to be *only wise*; one who is so indulgent a father, that when his children want *bread*, will not give them *stones*, nor *Scorpions* instead of *Fish*. And his meer indulgence it is (guided by his infinite wisdom) which is the cause that the things promised in these promises, are often not given to his children *in specie*, but in the *value*. They should have these things, if their wise father did not see they would be losers by them; if they have them not, that he may not seem guilty of breach of promise (for he cannot lye nor repent) they are made up in things infinitely better (and such exchange is no robbery) or else they have a satisfied mind in the want of them (and *godliness with contentment is great gain.*) It may be they have them not at their own desire, having prayed (as *Agur*) that God would *give them neither poverty nor riches, but food convenient for them.*

Thus I have largely demonstrated the Proposition, and made it good to you, that upon all rational accounts, which way soever we look to make up a judgement. The man or woman *fearing Jehovah, is the most excellent person; and the fear of the Lord is the most excellent quality or habit.* You hear before what pretences other persons, or things, have to

any

any degrees of excellency; and you have heard now, what *transcendent, superlative* excellency, these persons or things have above them; how (according to the dialect of the text) *they ascend above them all*. But I have yet a third thing to do, which will give a further evidence to this truth.

3. I have before considered those other excellencies in their full latitude of worth; supposing them not at all *subject to vanity*, nor liable to any rebatements from their true value, by reason of any accidents which may depretiate them. I must now take another view of them in their state of *vanity*, and shew you what both Reason and Religion shew necessary to be rebated from the true value of them; and then consider, whether the *fear of the Lord* be under such a subjection yea or no; if not, this will be (and that no slighty) further evidence, *That the fear of the Lord, is the most excellent thing; and the person fearing the Lord, the most excellent person.* For this I have a foundation in my text. *Favour* (saith *Bathsheba*) *is deceitful. Beauty is vain. Favour*, i. e. the favour of men; whether of great men, which is the *spring* of *honour*; or of the τὸ πλῆθος, vulgar, which is the *spring* of *fame, credit* and *reputation*. This is *deceitful*, שֶׁקֶר a lye, a meer falsity. Beauty is *vain*; we translate it in *concreto*, but it is in the Hebrew, in the abstract, הֶבֶל *vanity*; Vanity it self, that is, most vain.

It were easie to shew you by a plenty of

witneſſes, that the words in the Hebrew are both of vaſt ſignification, and ordinarily uſed to expreſs the utmoſt emptineſs, or unworthineſs of things; either upon the account of the *Nothingneſs* of them in reality; or the *Emptineſs* of them, as to the ſatisfying our expectations: Or the *Sin* and *Corruption* which ordinarily cleaveth to them, and attendeth them: Or the *uncertainty and inconſtancy of them:* Or their *periſhing nature*; or any other accounts: For indeed שָׁוְא & הֶבֶל are words generally uſed in Scripture, either to expreſs things of nought; or things that are ſinful; and ſo worſe than nought. But I will reduce my diſcourſe to ſome certain heads, and in ſome few particulars ſhew you the emptineſs and vanity of all other appearing excellencies, in ſome few particulars.

You have heard that all their excellency lieth either in the *approveableneſs* of ſome of them (ſuch as are the intellectual and moral vertues) *to the Reaſon of a man:* Or in their *uſefulneſs* and *ſubſerviency* to our *comfortable ſubſiſtence* in the world; or in this, That they are the *gifts of God*, by which he maketh one perſon to differ from another. But the falſhood now, and the vanity of all thoſe things for which we muſt rebate, lieth chiefly in theſe things.

1. They are *far bigger*, and *more glorious in appearance*, than they are in *reality*.

2. They are ſuch as never *fill* and *ſatisfie* the mind of the perſon that is poſſeſſed of them.

3. They

3. They are (many of them at least) dangerous snares to our immortal souls.

4. They are all of them subject to *eclipses, mutations* and *changes*, which when they fall under, the former advantages which any person had from them, will not recompence the disadvantages which he or she will have from their disappointments, in the lots or abatement of them.

5. They neither at all help, or make us to *excel* in the most needful *time*. I will speak something to each of these.

1. I say, *Those other things are far bigger, more, and more glorious in appearance than they are in reality.* Thus they are שקר & הבל Any thing which seemeth to be something, and is nothing; or which seemeth to be more than indeed it is, so far as it cometh short of what it seemeth to be; so far it is no better than a falshood, and meer lye. I will not instance in all those other things which I mentioned, as raising the price of men and women each above other: (that were too large a work) I will instance but in some few of them. Take that pretty thing which we call *Beauty*; it is indeed in appearance a great thing. Doth not the vain woman think so, who in the morning beholding her own reflection in her glass, and espying a little better air of her countenance, a better mixture of colours in her cheeks, than in other womens, thinks this is warrant enough for her to admire her self, stretch out her neck, and mince it with her feet all the day after? Or if the

view of her face doth not in all points please her, she thinketh it worth the while to spend both her money and her precious time to mend it with patchings and paintings, with trickings and trimmings of her self? And doth not the vain gallant think *Beauty* something, who is so bewitched with it, that forgetting the noble soul of which he is possessed (ordained to higher imployments;) and the reason which he inheriteth (which should guide him to a better purpose) thinks his money and his time well spent, while both are miserably expended to evidence his dotage upon this *painted Sepulchre*, which it may be within is nothing but *darkness*, *filth* and *rottenness*? In the mean time, let us look wistly upon this thing which we call *Beauty*; is it any more than a perfection of *bodily parts*, placed *in a due proportion each to other*, *and with a due and proportioned mixture of such colours* as are proper to *flesh* and *blood*?

As to the former, what is there in it more, than is to be found in many an Horse or Dog, it may be an higher degree? As to the latter, what is there more than in a Rose or a Lilly? Nay, what so much, as in many a flower of the field, or in many a picture? As to many of these it may be said (as our Saviour said of *Solomon* compared with the Lilly) The most beautiful woman is not for colour like one of them. Oh what a lye is beauty then! that which in outward appearance is such, that a vain woman will sacrifice her soul, life, estate, time,

time, to obtain, preserve or maintain it? that which a vain man will spend all that he is worth in a base service and homage to it? when in reality it is no further perfection, than may be found in a *Dog*, an *Horse*, or other brute creature; yea in a vegetable creature; in a pittiful flower or plant, above what can be found in any of the Sons and Daughters of men? For *Favour* or *Honour*; it is a thing that carrieth a great shew in the world; what high thoughts of themselves doth it raise in them that are dignified with it? what a supercilious eye do those that have it but in a superiour degree, cast upon those but a step beneath them? How much doth it make vain man admired, served, complemented in the world? But in reality, what is this gay thing? The world is yet at a loss where to find its residence; whether in *honorante*, or in *honorato*; in the person that giveth, or that receiveth it. Certain it is, that it is a meer air, and in reality just nothing; that which is often gained by sordid persons, which neither betters the man, as to his body, mind, nor soul; only serveth him as to a comfortable subsistence in this life, and gains him the wall, a cap and a knee, and a title. Take *Riches*, another thing which in vulgar opinion carries with it a great notion of excellency, and imprinteth upon man a considerable difference from his neighbour: They make a fair shew, and have a great appearance; hence whoso hath them, swells in the opinion of himself, and all he world does him homage.

But what is *silver* and *gold* in reality? What is gold more than *yellow sand?* and silver more than *white earth*, considered in it self, without the relative value which men put upon it? Indeed more (by far) is to be said for the inward habits of the mind; *Knowledge*, *Prudence*, *Sobriety*, and the reſt of the moral vertues; but neither are they without their vanity, as I ſhall ſhew you anon. I ſhall add no more to this firſt thing, demonſtrating the vanity and emptineſs of ſuch other things, as inhance the price of one man above another. They are a great deal more in appearance, than they are in reality.

2. The ſecond thing which I inſtanced in, was this, *They are ſuch as never fill or ſatisfie the mind of the perſon poſſeſſed of them*, like dreams of feaſts, notwithſtanding which, we are hungry; *lyes* in our *right hand*; like wind in the body, which often filleth the ſtomach, and ſpoileth the appetite to its proper food, but never nouriſheth the body, nor ſatisfieth the hunger. I ſhall ſhew,

1. *That they will not ſatisfie the wants of the ſoul.*

2. *That they leſs ſatisfie the ſouls expectation.*

1. I ſay firſt, *They will not ſatisfie the ſouls wants.* The true wants of the reaſonable ſoul, are, and can be ſatisfied with nothing but *divine influences*. It is a *noble ſpirit*, and none but the *Father of ſpirits* can fill its emptineſs. The ſoul while it ſleeps in the *Lethargy* of ſin, while it ſojourneth in its eſtate of eſtrangement from God (like the Prodigal)

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it feedeth Swine, and filleth its belly with the husks; but after it hath once fixed its resolution to return to its *Fathers house*, nothing less than God can fill it; it cries out (as once *Rachel* for children) *Lord give me Christ or else I die.* It is plainly impossible that any thing but the favour of God, and the sense of that favour, or at least *good hopes* of it through grace should ever satisfie that soul, that is once awakened to consider its self (as in its *natural constitution*) a spiritual, immortal being, ordained to an Eternity: and as it is (in its *depraved estate*) by nature *a child of wrath.* I say again, the soul thus reflecting upon it self, can be satisfied with nothing less than the sense, or firm hopes of Gods favour, making over the *Righteousness of Christ* unto it, and accepting it as righteous in and through Christ; and whatsoever soul is satisfied without this, is either ignorant of its own state and capacity, or exceeding vain and careless, not regarding its highest concerns. As *Abraham*, when God bid him *ask what he would, and he would give it him*, replied, *What canst thou give me, whiles I go childless?* So the awakened soul saith, *What can God give me whiles I go childless? Beauty* is a pretty thing; but what is it to Eternity? *Riches* are useful things, but they will not ransom my soul from the pit of Hell. *Honour* will serve me to take a place on the wall in this world; but it will not give me a *place* at Gods right hand. *Pleasure* is a sweet thing, oh! but *endless torments* will be a dreadful

issue

iſſue of it. *Great Friends and Relations* are great *bleſſings*; but it is Chriſt alone can ſtand my friend in the Court of Heaven, to ſpeak for me, that I may not be ſent unto eternal burnings.

2. And as nothing but divine influences will ſatisfie the *ſouls wants*: ſo nothing elſe *will ſatisfie the ſouls expectation.* The wiſe man, who had as great experience as any mortal man ever had, cries out; *The eye is not ſatisfied with ſeeing*, nor *the ear with hearing.* The ſoul never cries, *enough Lord*, till Chriſt be to it *all in all.* Every thing (the fear of the Lord only excepted) *is like the graſs on the houſe tops, with which the mower filleth not his hand: nor he that gathereth ſheaves his arm.* What vain woman was ever ſatisfied with beauty? or what vainer worldling had his expectation ever ſatisfied with the returns of gold and ſilver? who was ever ſatisfied with honour, or the favour of men? what ſtudent was ever filled with knowledge? Poor vain man looketh upon theſe things at a diſtance, and expecteth much from them, and promiſeth himſelf reſt and content in them: But though God hath given man many outward bleſſings; yet he hath excepted the *Reſt of the mind* from them. Hence man thinks, could I but arrive at ſuch an eſtate, at ſuch a degree of *honour*, *knowledge*, then I ſhould be ſatisfied; but alas! he findeth that he is but like the ſick perſon, that fancieth firſt one thing, then another, to pleaſe his pallat, and give him reſt, which when

when he hath tried, answereth not the expectation he had upon it. The more a man hath of these things, the more he still would have; are they not then deceitful? are they any thing better than a lye? But hath now *the fear of the Lord* any such vanity attending it? surely no. *I have learned* (saith St. *Paul*) *in all estates to be content; content to want, content to abound, &c.* It is true, till a Christian be in Heaven, he never hath so much of *divine influence*, as he desireth no more. There is a spiritual thirst which will never be quenched, but by the *Rivers of pleasure*, that *water the cœlestial Paradise*. But yet *grace*, as it leadeth to a fulness of satisfaction; so it presently possesseth the soul of a proportionable satisfaction; so as it saith to all the *Hamans* and *Dives* of the world (as *Esau* to *Jacob*) *I have enough my Brother, I have enough; keep what thou hast unto thy self.* *Diogenes* never undervalued *Alexanders* great offers, with so true an heart, as the soul possessed with it, undervalueth the whole Creation. Nor doth this ever fail *the souls expectation*. Every gracious soul is so far from finding any frustration in its expectations, from the enjoyments of God, that (as the *Queen of Sheba* to *Solomon*) it confesseth, that the half of *that sweetness and content* in the *holy waies of God*, which it hath met with since it turned into them, *was never told unto it*. But this is enough to have spoken to the second thing.

3. Thirdly, *Many of those other things* which

which I mentioned, *are most dangerous snares and traps to the poor creature.*

I shall open this general unto you by shewing you,

1. *That those other excellencies are often occasions to souls of great sinnings against God.*

2. *That many of them expose the person that hath them to great dangers and suffering; which the sweetness and good of them can in no measure compensate.*

1. I say first, *divers* (if not all of them) *are occasions of great sinnings to the soul that is* (seemingly) *blessed with them.* And this is indeed a very great vanity. Here I might enter into a large discourse, shewing you what *snares* and *temptations to sin* lie in *Beauty*, *Wisdom* (worldly wisdom I mean) *Riches*, *Honours*, &c. In short, in all those other things which I mentioned (the fear of the Lord alone excepted) by which one man is in the *way* of excellency distinguished from his neighbour.

1. More generally, *They are all of them great occasions to men, to think of themselves above what they ought to think* (which is the Apostles *Periphrasis* of Pride.) There is naturally in us all a propension to *Pride*. Now that corruption wants an *hill* for to stand and shew it self upon, until a man hath discovered, or at least fancieth that he hath discovered in himself something in which he excelleth another; which being once discovered, he thinks he hath warrant enough to vaunt himself, and to be a self-admirer, to scorn,

slight

slight and undervalue others (how worthy soever) if they be not, or he judgeth that they are not equal with him, in that particular thing wherein he fancieth his own excellency. But besides this snare which lieth in them all, there is scarce any of them but hath a peculiar snare in it, if not more than one. *Beauty* is an occasion to *chambering and wantonness*. *Knowledge* (saith the *Apostle*) *puffeth up*. *Worldly Prudence* too too ordinarily exalteth the soul above the wisdom which is from God; whence the Apostle adviseth men to *become fools, that they may be wise*. *Riches, honour,* and *favour of men*, are usual temptations to *pride, luxury, oppression of others, &c. Prov.* 18. 23. *The poor useth intreaties, but the rich answereth roughly, Micah* 6. 12. *The rich are full of violence*. Upon which, as well as upon other accounts it is that our Saviour saith, *Matth.* 9. 23. *That it is easier for a Camel to go thorow the eye of a Needle, than for a rich man to enter into the Kingdom of God. Do not rich men oppress you?* (saith the Apostle, *James* 2. 6.) It would ask me a great deal of time at large to discourse to you the several snares for the soul, which lie hid in all those creature excellencies which I have instanced in. But now in this *fear of the Lord*, there's nothing of this danger. *Solomon* telleth us, *That the fear of the Lord is to depart from iniquity*. So *Job*, chap. 28. *v.* 28. *The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil, that is understanding*. So that we may say of *the fear of the Lord*, as *Solomon*

speaks

ſpeaks of the man made rich by *the bleſſing of the Lord*. *The bleſſing of the Lord maketh rich, and addeth no ſorrow with it.* Other things give a man ſome ſhadow of happineſs in this life; but there is *ſorrow* added therewith; and oft-times they do *ten thouſand times* more harm to the ſoul, than good to the outward man. But now *the fear of the Lord* is a *Roſe* without a *prickle*; it maketh the ſoul of a man happy, and addeth no ſorrow therewith. Inſtead of expoſing the ſoul to temptation, it armeth the ſoul againſt all temptations to ſin againſt God. Amongſt all other excellencies, one would think the *habits of moral vertues* ſhould be moſt free from this vanity; yet even they have in them a moſt dangerous ſnare. The perſon *morally righteous*, being very apt to raiſe up to himſelf *a confidence in the fleſh*, and to deſpiſe the *Righteouſneſs of God*, which (as the Apoſtle Rom. 1. 17. ſaith) is revealed *from faith to faith*. Upon this very account it was, that *Saul* (when Chriſt was diſcovered to him) judged *thoſe things loſs, which he once accounted gain*, Phil. 3. 7. *But what things were gain to me, thoſe I counted loſs for Chriſt.* What theſe things were, he telleth you, *verſ.* 5, 6. One was, [*touching the righteouſneſs which is of the Law blameleſs.*] How was this loſs to him, but as his proneneſs to reſt in that as ſufficient, hindered him from accepting of the righteouſneſs of God revealed from *faith to faith*. This very thing kept the Jews from *ſubmitting to the Righteouſneſs of God*. This made our

Savior

Saviour tell the *Pharisees*, and other *Jews*, that *Publicans and Harlots should enter into the Kingdom of God, but the children of the Kingdom should be cast out.* Now in the *fear of the Lord* there is no snare; it keepeth the soul from sin, but no way exposeth the soul to sin.

2. *Those other distinctive excellencies, are great snares, as they expose the person possessed of them, to great suffering, and give him no satisfaction and comfort in suffering.* These sufferings which usually attend those other excellencies, flow from the *envy*, *malice*, *jealousie*, *covetousness* or *ambition* of others. If a man or woman excel their neighbour in *riches*, *favour*, *knowledge*, *honour*, &c. they presently become the objects of their *envy* and *hatred*: this ariseth from the *pride* of our fellow-creatures, that will not allow them patience to be excelled. It were endless to tell you, what some mens *riches*, and *honours*, and *favour of men*, have *cost*; and what *beauty* hath cost others; and what is most sad. Their sufferings afford them no satisfaction proportionable to their smart; they under them bear the whole weight of their cross with their own shoulders. It is true *the fear of the Lord* too doth not indemnifie the persons possessed with it, from trials of *scourgings*, and *cruel mockings*; no not from the *fiery trial*, which the Apostle would not have believers think *strange*. Saint *Paul* had both *troubles without*, and *fears within*. And it was said of old, *That he who departeth*

from

from evil, maketh himself a prey. Which is a sentence verifieth it self still, and will hold so long as there is a *World* to *hate us*, which hated Christ first (*And the Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord*) or any of the *seed of the Serpent in the world*, which will be *till our Lord hath trodden all his enemies under his feet.* But as usually the sufferings of Gods people on this single account, are not proportionable to those others mentioned: so neither are they without such a proportionable comfort and satisfaction, as makes them indeed no sufferings to them. The Martyrs *fire* is become *a bed of Roses. The sufferings of this life not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed.*

4. A fourth thing which evinceth the *vanity* and *deceitfulness* of those other excellencies, is, *their subjection to vicissitudes and changes.* I take this to be a principle adjudged by reason; *That supposing a thing to have in it some grains of excellency; yet if it be subject to diminution, putrifaction; or any kind of consumption, there must be a proportionable deduction and abatement from its excellency.* For we reasonably judge, that any thing which hath any intrinsecal goodness in it, it is the more excellent, by how much it is more during, and of longer continuance. Now take all those excellencies which I mentioned as contradistinct to this *fear of the Lord*: They all of them have an uncertainty in them, which must necessarily with considerate persons, abate of their true value. Though beauty be but a pittiful thing,

yet

yet how much more valuable were it than it is, if we did not see it a flower which upon every *frost*, or *cold wind*; every sickness and disease will fade? how much more valuable were strength than it is, if age and sickness would not make it abate? and riches, if they would not *take to themselves wings and flee away*; and honour, if it were an indelible character. But alas! all these things are gourds; they come up, and they perish too in a night. Beauty lasteth but a few years, if in the mean time no disease abate, or take it away. Strength hath no longer date. Riches are subject to the hand of violence, who may plunder them, and to the thief, who may *break through and steal* the goods which we had thought laid up for many years. They are also subject to the disposal of divine Providence, who often declares them *moveables*, and disposeth of the stock of this world this or that way, as it pleaseth him. Honours depend upon the wills of Princes, and are given and taken away, when, and as they please. There is nothing of a certainty, or of a perpetuity in any of these things. But now the fear of the Lord is subject to no such accident. *I will* (saith God) *put my fear into their hearts, that they shall never depart from me.* It is a thing (as I have shewed you) of *infinite value*, and is not subject to any change at all. It is a Jewel with which, when the soul is once adorned, it never putteth it off any more; but weareth it till it entreth Eternity, and puts on the Crown of Glory for evermore. It

is *the seed of God*, of which the Apostle speaketh, which abideth in men, and keepeth the soul that it cannot sin the *sin unto death*. It is the well-spring of living water, which when once it springs up in the soul, *it springeth up unto eternal life*. It is a Jewel that will not be debased; gold, that will not admit of rust. O the excellency of grace above all the perishing excellencies of other things! which (as the Apostle speaks of those beggerly elements) *perish with the using*. We may say of this *fear of the Lord*, compared with other excellencies, as the Prophet speaketh of the *grass* and the *flower*, compared with the word of the Lord; *The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth; but the word of the Lord endureth for ever*. Beauty withereth, and strength withereth; *Riches* fade, and *Honours* fade; and all other created excellencies *wither* and *fade*; but the *fear of the Lord abideth for ever*.

5. Lastly, *All those other excellencies fail the persons which have them in the most needful times*. If there were something of vanity in beauty, some *deceitfulness* in *favour*, some *emptiness* in all those other things which I mentioned; yet much might be spoken for them, would they but serve a soul in an *evil day*. But if this be found true of them, that (like Swallows) they all leave us in *Winter*, and are furthest off from giving us that satisfaction which we desire from them, and they in appearance promise us in a time when we have most need of them; certainly this must needs

needs depreciate them in the view of every rational eye. Now that they do this is demonstrable past all denial. We have two *evil daies*; (I mean evil to our sense) the day of *Affliction*, and the *day of death*. In the day of affliction, be it *bodily* or *spiritual*, external or internal, what do all things in the world signifie? or wherein doth one man differ from another, save only by the *fear of the Lord*. The beautious face hath lost its lovely colour. The strong mans sinews are loosed. The knowing man is ignorant how to give himself ease. The prudent man is not wise enough to remove the distempers, nor yet under it to comfort himself. None of them, by their *knowledge*, *learning*, *wisdom*, can save themselves from death; nor redeem their souls from the pit. *As dieth the fool, so also dieth the prudent man*; *he knows their life*, and what profit hath the poor creature of all those fine things which before differenced him from his neighbour? wherein doth he now differ? he is alike laid in the grave with him. But in these hours the *fear of the Lord* is excellent, and of infinite advantage to the soul that is blessed with it.

1. *In a day of Affliction.* It is true, *grace*, and *the fear of the Lord* doth not deliver a man from the common incidents of that mortal condition into which sin hath brought us; it doth neither free us from *troubles* without, nor yet from *fears* within; but it giveth the soul *comfort* and *satisfaction* in this hour. *Lord remember* (saith *Hezekiah*) *how I have walked*

before thee in truth, and with a perfect heart. A man fearing God in an hour of affliction, is quite another man from one under the same kind and degree of affliction that he is; fuller of strength, fuller of comfort; more satisfied with his condition.

2. *In the day of Death.* It is true, the first curse must have its verification. We have sinned, and we must die. But *dieth the child of God as a fool dieth? dieth a man fearing the Lord,* as the man who hath *no fear of God in* his heart? surely there is a great difference in their latter end. Even *Balaam* had some sight of this, when he desired that *he might die the death of the righteous; that his latter end might be like his.* See that famous instance of *David,* a man indeed according to Gods own heart; yet you know how he failed both in
1 Sam. 23. the matter of *Bathsheba* and *Uriah.* He comes to his death-bed, and the Scripture recordeth his last words; *He considereth the Rule which God had set him, that he who ruled over men should be just, ruling them in the fear of the Lord: that his light should be like the light of the morning, &c.* He considers again that *his house had not been so with God, as it ought to have been?* what comforts him? *Thou hast* (saith he) *made a Covenant with me, well ordered, and sure in all things, &c.* This, and this alone is that which in these hours of distress, can relieve a poor creature: and the worst of men will give in their evidence to this. They will at their dying hour, and when they lie upon beds of sickness, cryout;

Favour

Favour is deceitful, Beauty is vain. They will then agree with *Solomon*, to warn their friends to *fear God, and keep his Commandments*, telling them, *this is the end of all.*

This now is sufficient to have spoken in the *Explication* or evidence of the point, which may all be summed up in this one Argument.

Whoso is possessed of that quality which both in it self considered absolutely, and in respect of all circumstances, is the most excellent person.

But that man or woman in whom the true fear of the Lord is, and dwelleth most eminently, is possessed of the most excellent habit; whether it be considered in it self more absolutely, or with respect to circumstances. Therefore that person is the most excellent person.

I come now to the Application of the Point.

Use 1. In the first place, what you have heard may serve to evince the *vulgar mistake*, concerning *the excellent of the earth*; and also *to abate those high conceits which men ordinarily have of themselves*; who in the little things of the world differ a little from their neighbours. The world (if this Doctrine be true) is greatly mistaken, both in their judgements concerning the most *excellent things*, and concerning the most *excellent persons.*

1. I say first, *in their judgements as to the things that differ*; and are more excellent than other. If you should run to and fro the streets of your City, and ask every one whom you

meet, *Friend*, let me have your opinion; what do you judge the most excellent thing in the world? it is very like they would not all agree in their answers; some would say, *Pleasures*, and *a satisfaction of their lusts*. Others would say *Riches*; if a man had as much money as he could spend, a plentiful estate to live on. Others would say, *Honour* and *Favour*: if a man be great at Court, a favourite to Princes, they will judge him the happiest man alive. It may be others would judge *Learning* and *Knowledge* is most excellent; or *Moral Vertue* is the most excellent: but where shall we find a person who would say, *The fear of the Lord* is the most excellent thing? Some rare person possibly might be found, who would say with *David*; Psal. 4. *There be many that say, who will shew us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us.* Or with *Solomon*; after he had tasted of all those sweet things which the world affords, *Eccles.* 12. 13. *Hear the conclusion of all, Fear God, and keep his Commandments.* But the most of men would neither like *David*'s nor *Solomon*'s judgement in the case. Nay, even of those who would say, *Grace* is the most excellent thing; how few are they whose practice would not condemn them in what they speak with their mouths? Man naturally *loves*, *desires*, *valueth*, *chuseth*, *approveth* the things which he judgeth most excellent. The low opinion which the most men have of *Religion*, and the *fear of the Lord*; their little endeavours for it, and pursuit

purſuit after it, are plain inſtances (let men ſay what they will) that they judge other things more excellent. Yet, could you meet with any who had the ſentence of death in himſelf, any ſtrong apprehenſions that he muſt in a ſhort time go down to the pit, and upon whom the terrours of Hell had ſeized, this man would tell you, that of all things, *the fear of the Lord is moſt excellent*; which is enough to evince the truth of the thing, and that nothing but the violence of temptations, and prevalence of corruptions makes men to judge otherwiſe.

2. As what you have heard leadeth you to judge truly concerning the beſt things; ſo it leadeth you alſo to a true judgement *concerning the beſt perſons*. What the Prophet complained in his time, is true in our time. *We call the proud, happy*. We judge them the beſt, that are the *richeſt*; the moſt *honourable*; and who are dignified with the greateſt titles. Thus oft-times we call a *covetous worldling*, a *griping Uſurer*, or *Extortioner*; a *ſwiniſh drunkard*, a *ſordid unclean perſon*; a *prophane ſwearer*, a *blaſphemous curſer*; *one that rends the ſacred Name of God with unheard of oaths, revilings, blaſphemies*. The beſt men in our *Cities*, in our *Pariſhes* (and yet we contend our Pariſhes to be *particular Churches*, and theſe the *members of them*.) Away with ſuch more than Pagan *Non-ſenſe*. The Heathens would not have judged thus. What *Roman* did not prefer *Cato* before *Clodius* or *Catiline*? In the mean time, what account is made

amongst us of men and women *fearing the Lord*; they are counted as the filth and off scouring of the earth; *Fanaticks*, *Precisians*, *Puritans*; the *vilest persons* on the earth; the only persons fit for all manner of filth to be thrown upon; all manner of injuries to be done unto; the only persons fit to be thrown into *Gaols*, &c. Yea and this *fear of Jehovah* is become their crime; if they dared to sin against God, they might avoid these dangers. Nor is it any wonder at all; *The Disciple is not above his Master; nor is the Servant above his Lord.* They that said of our Saviour, *He hath a Devil*, may be allowed to say so of his Disciples, I hope. The
2 Thes. 3. 2. Apostle calls wicked men, and such as have not faith, ἀτόπων, *unreasonable men.* The Scripture ordinarily calleth them *fools.* Want of reason and understanding in men and women appears in nothing so much, as in their judgement about persons and things that differ. Would not you account *that man a fool* that should *chuse an Apple* before a *piece of Gold*; and prefer a serving-man, because dressed up in gay clothes, before a Prince, or noble man? or before some other person of known intrinsecal worth and excellency? and are not those persons fools, and unreasonable men, who when reason thus many waies evinceth the fear of the Lord to be the most excellent thing; and persons fearing the Lord to be the most excellent persons; yet dote upon other things, and persons, as more excellent than it, or them; desire, chuse, delight in any

persons

persons rather than these? yet this is the ordinary course and practice of the world. What more despicable than the fear of the Lord? Who makes himself so much a prey, so odious and despicable, as he who dares not to sin against God, and is afraid of disobeying his sacred precepts? Is not their judgement an evidence of their folly? Do they not still make it good, that wanting faith, they are *unreasonable men?*

Use 2. But leaving the ignorant world, which knoweth not the excellency of Grace; and is no fitter to judge between things earthly and spiritual, than the blind man is to judge of colours that differ. *Will not this Doctrine convince Gods people of many errours in practice?* There are a people in the Lord, who own the Lord, and seriously profess unto his fear; yet neither live as if they judged the fear of God the most excellent thing; or those who *fear the Lord* the most *excellent persons.* Give me leave to speak freely to you, who I know do own what you have heard to be truth, and will profess a cordial assent unto it. Do you indeed judge the *fear of the Lord*, Grace, the *best* and most excellent thing? Do you judge persons *fearing the Lord*, the *most excellent persons?* I had rather you should judge your selves, than my self to pronounce sentence against you. Let me therefore only offer you two or three Questions to propound to your selves.

1. *Whether do you not value your selves more*

for

for other things, than for the fear of the Lord, with which you are blessed? It is true, through a *demissiori*, and humbleness of mind. Some naturally have lower opinions of themselves than others have; but there is none lives but hath some value for him, or her self. Men will speak vilely and meanly of themselves; and a child of God, from a principle of Grace, is *vile* and *mean* in his own eyes; but yet there is none who hath not some good thoughts for himself. Now I would have you inquire of your own souls, what that is which raiseth your thoughts of your selves; *Whether it be the fear of the Lord or no?* The Jer. 9. 24. Prophet calleth out to us, *Jer.* 9. 24. *Let not the strong man glory in his strength; nor the wise man in his wisdom; nor the rich man in his riches: but let him that glorieth, glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth the Lord.* I am afraid, that if we ask our own hearts, wherein they chiefly glory? we shall find them sincerely making us some other answer than this, that *we glory chiefly in this, that we understand and know the Lord.* Take a man or woman fearing God, if they have but the advantage of a little parentage, a little birth or breeding, or some great relations; are they not apt to glory in these more than in this, That *God is their Father*, the *Lord Jesus Christ their Saviour? &c.* If they have but a *little honour*, or *estate*, are not their hearts more apt to glory in this, than in the riches of grace they have in possession? or the riches of glory which they have in reversion?

than

than in this great honour which the Lord hath dignified them with, that they ſhould be called the Sons of God? It is reported of *Theodoſius* a Chriſtian Emperour, that he gloried more in this, that *he was the ſervant of Chriſt*, than that he was the *Emperour of a great part of the world*. I am ſure we ſhould glory more in our intereſt in Chriſt, than in all the world beſides. But alas how few are to be found that are truly of that good Emperours mind; that make their boaſt of God, and what he hath done for their ſouls; and look upon this as their great glory? yet if they do not, they do not in practice attend to what they profeſs to believe concerning the excellency of the fear of the Lord.

2. *Whether do you value others according to the fear of the Lord which you ſee in them?* The Pſalmiſt gives this as the character of one who ſhall come to Heaven, *Pſal.* 15. 4. *He in whoſe eyes a vile perſon is contemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord.* Who is a vile perſon? there is a vile perſon in mans account; thus thoſe are vile who are *poor and ſervile*; whoſe condition in the world is mean and abject, are accounted *vile*. There is alſo a vile perſon *in Gods account*; ſo the only *vile perſon* is the *lewd, debaucht, impenitent ſinners*; ſuch as God hath in judgement given up to *vile affections*, *Rom.* 1. 26. One that *ſpeaketh villany*, *Iſa.* 32. 6. Thus 1 *Sam.* 3. 13. The Sons of *Samuel* that *lay with the women*, who came to the Tabernacle and were prophane in abuſing holy things,

are

are called *vile persons*. So the prophane *swearer*, *curser*, *blasphemer*; the *brutish drunkard*, the beastly *unclean person*; these are all *vile persons*; God counts them so, the Scripture calls them so (let their circumstances in the world be what they will) God overlooks them, as signifying nothing in his eyes; they are all *base*, *vile persons* in his eyes.

Now this is made the character of one that shall dwell in Gods holy hill; he must be one *in whose eyes a vile person is contemned*. Not that he shakes off his *natural duty*, or his *moral subjection* and *duty* to such a one, if God hath put him or her in a subjection to them. A godly child honours his Parent (as his Parent.) A godly woman will honour and obey her husband (as her head.) A godly person will give *honour* and *obedience* to such as are in Authority over him, though possibly they may be *vile persons*, but not *as such*; they will in their hearts contemn their vile affections and dispositions, their lewd and prophane courses, whiles they give that reverence and honour to them, which the Laws of *Nature*, *God* and *Man* require, with respect to the Authority with which they are clothed toward us, and the subordination in which we are set towards them. But it is further added, *He honoureth them* [the Hebr. is, *he glorifieth them*] *that fear the Lord*. *Musculus* observeth, that it is an easie thing to *contemn a vile person*, especially if his malice hath hurt us; but it is not so easie to honour

them

them that *fear the Lord*; especially if they be such whose lives before *have been stained with sin*, and they are but in the *exercise of Repentance*. Or in case they live under wicked Magistrates, and are black through persecutions. Or in case they be mean, and of small estate in the world. But Sirs, if we be such as fear the Lord our selves,

1. *We cannot but have a true honour and value for those in whom we see the fear of the Lord, let their circumstances in the world be what they will*: be they never so much reviled, persecuted, abused, be they never so mean and poor, in never so vile and abject a condition. But alas, how few are there who fall not under the reproof of the Apostle; *Having the faith of God without respect of persons*. If one cometh near them with a gold Ring, and goodly Apparel (yea though he on the be a vile person, which yet seemeth not to be the Apostles case) and *there come also a poor man having vile rayment*; have we not respect to them *that have the gold Ring, and the goodly Apparel? and do we not despise the poor Christian that hath the vile rayment?* Do we not say to the former, *Sit thou here in a good place?* and to the poor, *Sit thou there*, or *under my foot-stool?* Thus, do we not *despise the poor*, and in them oft-times those that fear the Lord in an eminent measure and degree, and (at least) interpretatively (as St. *James* saith) *Blaspheme that holy Name by which we are called?* It is our duty to value others according to the fear of the Lord in them, and Jam. 2. 1.

more

more or less excellent according to that degree of the *fear of the Lord* which we discern in any of their souls; and we should do so if we truly judged the *fear of the Lord*. As it is the most excellent thing, and the persons that fear the Lord, the most excellent persons.

3. Ask your selves, *what more excellent thing you do than others?* Wherein you live a more noble, excellent life than others live? In reason, those who judge themselves the more noble and excellent persons, stand obliged to live more distinguishing excellent lives ratable to their honour and dignity. The *Gentleman* thinks himself obliged to live as a *Gentleman*; the *Noble man* as a Noble man. And it speaks a low and dirty spirit, for any man to look upon his honour and dignity, as that which gives him priviledge for a low and sordid converse. Christians, do you live according to your order and dignity? You that are Christians indeed, are *the excellent of the earth*: *David* calls you so; reason evinceth you to be such. You have ascended above all others in divine favour; you excel others in *spiritual gifts*: in what do you live ratably to your order? It was our Saviours question to his Disciples, *What do you do more than others?* *Matth.* 5. 47. In what doth your conversation towards God more distinguish you? Are you more in sufferings, in prayers, in reading the Word, in hearing of it, in communion with Gods people, more holy, more patient? &c. Wherein doth your conversation more shine

Mat. 5. 47.

before

before men? Are you more humble, more meek, more just and exact in your dealings? more free and liberal, more compassionate and merciful? This is to live ratably to your order and profession; and if you do not do this, you do not live like the most excellent persons. But I proceed.

Thirdly, *What you have heard may give you the true notion of one fearing the Lord.* The fear of God is an excellent thing, and in some degree approves its self to the natural reason of men; but more yet to those who in an outward Profession (at least in some degree) own the Scripture as the Rule of their life and conversation. Hence it is that every one is a pretender to it, and thinks it an high dishonour to him, to be thought or discoursed of as a person *not fearing the Lord.* Hence, you shall observe in our Law, in the ordinary indictments for *Felonies*, this is put in, Such a one *not having the fear of God before his eyes*, did this or that, &c. But amongst those who would be thought persons *fearing the Lord*, we shall find that the number of such as indeed do fear him, is a very small number. You may judge from what you have heard, who they are who indeed do fear God. Our Saviour saith, *Not every one that saith Lord, Lord, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.* Not every one who saith, he *feareth the Lord*, doth indeed fear him. How many are there that say so, to whom we must reply, as *Samuel* to *Saul*, boasting of his obedience, *What* 3 Branch.

then

then meaneth the bleating of the Sheep, and the lowing of the Oxen? What mean those bold and presumptious actions against the Commandments of the Lord? What means that course of sin which they run; that trade which they make of dishonouring God? Yea and as it is not every one that saith, *he feareth the Lord*; nor is it every one that hath some dread of God upon him, at some times, of whom it can be said, that he is a person fearing *Jehovah*. There is so much *Majesty* and *Power*, so much *Greatness* and *Ability* to punish every created Being in the *Divine Being*; that every creature naturally dreadeth God; even the *Devil* that hateth God, yet *trembleth*: (So the Apostle tells you) *The Devils believe and tremble.* And there was never any person in the world so *vile*, but at one time or other, something of this discovered it self in him. That wretched *Emperour of Rome*, who so impudently defied the *Deity*; yet when it thundred, would run under a bed. But it is not, I say, every one who hath some awe and terrour of God upon his spirit, who can be called, *A person fearing God.* For then God said no more of *Job* than might have been said of *Saul*, *Ahab*, or *Pharaoh*, who were made at last to reverence the Divine Majesty, and to tremble before the *Maker of Heaven and Earth*, *Prov.* 8. 13. *The fear of the Lord is to hate evil*, *Prov.* 16. 6. *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.* That man feareth the Lord who hath not only a reverence and dread of God upon his heart,

Prov. 8. 13. 16. 6.

but

but in whom this dread worketh to make the person that hath it to take heed of every sin, and to perform every duty, to avoid all that the Lord forbiddeth, and to do all that God commandeth. This it is for a *man or woman to fear Jehovah*. But you will say, if this be so, where is that person to be found of whom this can be predicated; or how shall any person satisfie himself, that he is by the *fear of the Lord* distinguished from another? This is a great question; and the Holy Ghost having thought fit to express the whole of *Grace* and *Godliness* by this notion, the resolution of it will exceedingly tend to the satisfaction of such souls as *thirst after righteousness*. To which purpose now I shall lay down some few Conclusions, which will open this thing to you.

1. *A true fear of God in what soul soever it is found, is not only the product of sense; but the operation of faith*. This is one great and material difference betwixt that fear and dread of God which may be found in a natural man, and that which is found in every true child of God. There is a terrour, and awe, and dread of God, which (as I told you before) sometimes seizeth the hearts of the greatest Atheists, and most debaucht wretches in the Earth. But this dread is ordinarily but the effect and product of sense: the poor wretch seeth some terrible work of God, and trembleth; or feeleth something of the weight of Gods hand. Hence, as soon as the impression is off his sense, the fear and

dread of God is also off his heart. And thus it will be with all that *fear*, which is but the product of sense. The natural mans fear is not at all caused from *faith*; neither from the *habit of faith* which is within us; nor from the *object of faith* which is without us (I mean the Word of God) he doth not fear God, because of what the holy Scriptures tell him concerning God, he believeth not that. But now the fear of God in a gracious soul is the issue of faith. A Christian knows the Scripture, and what that revealeth concerning God: and now the Lord having by his Spirit wrought up his soul to give a firm and stedfast assent to what is revealed in his Word: he feareth the great God as much when he seeth or feeleth nothing of the greatness of his power in his works of Providence, as when he is under the greatest demonstrations of sense. It is the precept of *Solomon*, *Prov.* 23. 17. *Be thou in the fear of the Lord at all times.* Indeed, he that is not in the *fear of the Lord* at all times, doth truly fear the Lord at no time: for where fear is the operation and fruit of faith, the effect is as abiding and permanent as the cause: now the cause of the fear of the Lord in that person, is his firm assent to what is revealed in the holy Scriptures concerning God. The Word of the Lord abiding the same for ever; and the Propositions in it having an eternal verity; and the seed of God also once cast in the soul, abiding at all times in it, it is impossible but this soul should have a *fear and dread* of God upon his

his heart in *health*, as well as in *sickness*; in *prosperity*, as well as in *adversity*; in a time of the *greatest liberty*, as well as in a time of the *greatest straits*, when the Providence of God may propose the greatest objects of terrour unto him. If the soul of any at all times dreadeth and reverenceth the great God of Heaven and Earth; and that by reason of what the Word of God revealeth, and it believeth concerning him; this is an excellent sign, that the true fear of God is in that soul. Though it is true, the various workings of Divine Providence, may make this fear (as to the servile part of it) higher and greater at some one time than at another.

2. Although the true *fear of the Lord in any soul, be not consistent with a course of deliberate sinning against God, and defying the Divine Majesty; yet it is consistent in the same soul with many sinnings, both of ignorance and of infirmity.* If there were none feared God, but such as were wholly free from sin, there were no such excellent person in the world as I have been discoursing of: For *who liveth and sinneth not against God?* But I must open this General.

1. I say, *the fear of God is not* (in any soul) *consistent with open defiances of the Divine Majesty, or constant courses of deliberate sinning.* There are some in the world that live in an open defiance of Heaven; the Atheistical blasphemer, the prophane swearer and curser; and such like eminent sinners: Every one that cometh near them, may say, the

fear of God is not in these persons: No nor with any course of *deliberate* or presumptuous sinning, when a man is free and under no height of temptation, to do this or that thing which he knoweth to be what God hath forbidden him to do, and yet he will do it, and doth do it; and that not once only, but again and again, from one day to another, making a course of it, how dwelleth the fear of God in that soul? God hath said, he that doth these things shall die; he shall be plagued in this life, and he shall die eternally. The poor wretch knoweth this, and yet presumptuously doth these things; how can the dread or fear of God be in any judgement of charity judged to dwell in this soul?

2. But I say, the *fear of God is consistent in the soul with much sin*; either *sins of ignorance*, or *sins of infirmity*. Experience teacheth this.

1. For *sins of ignorance*: a servant may truly fear his master, and a child his father; and yet they may both do many things that their superiours would not have done, if they do not perfectly know their will: It is so betwixt the child and servant of God, and his Father and Master which is in Heaven.

2. I say it is also consistent with much *sinning of weakness and infirmity*: *Sins of infirmities* are of two sorts.

1. Such as are of *pure weakness* and *infirmity*, which are failures in such things; as through our *natural weakness* and *impotency we cannot perform*.

2. Such as are mixt with something of *wilfulness*;

wilfulness; but yet the great cause of our admission of them, is some *original weakness and infirmity in us*. Such now are those sins which we commit, upon the prevalence of some *affection* or *passion* in us, whether *love*, or *fear*, or *anger*, &c. Lust prevailed on *David*; fear on *Peter*: and truly it is hard to say what sin that is, which upon this account, a soul *truly fearing God*, may not fall into. He that considereth, that *Lot* and *Noah* were surprized with *Wine*; and *Lot* committed incest, *Abraham* fornication, or *adultery* rather: what *David* did in the murther of *Uriah*, and taking of *Bathsheba* to his bed: what *Peter* did in the hour of temptation; and what *Job* did in his passion, will (I say) be at a great loss to fix upon such a sin, concerning which he can say, this is a sin which one fearing God cannot be guilty of. On the other side; there is no sin which a child of God can live in, making it his constant course and practice.

3. Though *the fear of God will constrain a soul to every duty; yet even the soul which truly feareth God, may either through ignorance, or through weakness, fail much in the performance of his duty.* I say, the fear of God will *constrain a soul to the performance of every duty*: By duty, I mean, whatsoever God commandeth to be done; your reason teacheth you this. Will any of you think, that your child or servant feareth you, who will not do every thing which you command them? The Centurions servants feared him; he said to one,

one, *go*, and he went; to another, *come*, and he came; to a third, *do this*, *and he did it*. Every soul that feareth God, doth likewise. But yet I say, even that soul which truly feareth God, may yet fail much in the performance of something of his duty: And that,

1. Through *ignorance* or *forgetfulness*. The child that truly feareth his Father, may possibly not know; or if he hath known, he may have forgotten something that his Father would have him do: So may a child of God; *We know in part* (saith the Apostle) and what we do know, we (through forgetfulness of our duty) do not always attend to in the hour when we should do it.

2. Secondly, Through *wantonness*; we have (the best of us) wanton hearts, which are easily led aside from our duty; and while we are in the world, we are incompassed with a multitude of temptations; we are subject to be flattered from our duty, by the *Sirens* of the world, and to be frowned from our duty, by the frowns of the world. And indeed, if the flatteries and frowns of the world have no influence upon us; yet our spiritual duty is a thing that agreeth not with flesh and blood; it pincheth our flesh, and that is very ready to say to us, *Spare thy self*; or to suggest to us, that God doth not expect from our hands; or at least will not strictly insist upon such measures of duty as the holy Scriptures seem to lay out for us; but God will give us leave for five hundred, to set down fifty. *Who liveth*,

and

and doth not fail much in his duty?

But yet as to this point of duty, ſomething will be ſeen more in a ſoul truly fearing God, than in another ſoul.

1. Firſt, The ſoul fearing the Lord, *will not live in a conſtant neglect or omiſſion of any known duty.* It is one thing to omit a duty at this or that time; another thing never to perform it. A man or woman fearing the Lord, may under the force of ſome temptation; or in a multiplicity of buſineſs, erre; by omitting a morning or evening ſacrifice of prayer or praiſe; or in the ſtrict obſervation of the Lords day. But it is not poſſible that ſuch a one ſhould live in a conſtant violation of the Lords Sabbath; or without God in the world from day to day, and from week to week, never ſo much as calling upon his Name; the reaſon is, becauſe the fear of the Lord in his heart, biaſſeth him to his duty; and though ſome worldly diſtraction (like a rub to a Boul) turneth him out of his road; yet when he is over that, the *biaſs* works again, and his ſoul turneth to his courſe. Again,

2. Secondly, A ſoul truly *fearing the Lord, will hardly omit ſuch duties as God in his precept hath put ſome ſpecial Emphaſis upon.* For as it is in our commands to our children; though we may command them many things; yet there may be ſome things that we lay a greater ſtreſs upon, that our children or ſervants underſtand our *ſpecial will* to be, that we ſhould be careful in them: So it is in the precepts of God; there are ſome which the

Lord hath in his Word laid a great *Emphasis* upon them: Our Saviour justifieth this distinction, when he telleth the Pharisees, They *tithed Mint, and Anuis, and Cummin; but neglected the greater and weightier things of Gods Law.* Now here the soul truly fearing God, will be very strict, and will very rarely omit these. And hence possibly it is that souls truly *fearing God,* are generally found very strict *in the matter of his worship*; both as to the thing, and as to the manner of the performance, God having in his Word more *Emphatically* and severely declared his will in these things: So in matters of *Righteousness and Mercy*; and in all such other things as are the weightier things of Gods Law.

Thus far I have shewed you, how the fear of the Lord in any soul where it is, works, both 1. In reference to the *Word of God*; it trembles at that. 2. In reference to *sin*. 3. In reference to *duty*. I shall proceed yet a little further in this Argument, giving you some notes of a person יראי יהוה ? fearing the Lord.

4. Fourthly, *A person fearing Jehovah, will have upon his heart a great awe of Divine Judgement*; or *whatsoever looketh like such.* There is no person truly fearing the Lord, but in some measure understandeth what that Lord is; and being possessed with a true notion of God, it is as natural for the rational creature to fear him, in the least roarings of his judgements; as for the *beasts of the Forrest to tremble when the Lion roareth.* For as their trembling

trembling proceedeth from a natural sense of their subjection to the Lion, and the Power he hath over them: So doth this persons dread proceed from the apprehensions he hath of the Greatness and Majesty of the Divine Being; as also from what he believeth of his severity and justice. Besides this; There is no soul truly fearing God, but hath been at some time or other, less or more under the *spirit of bondage*; or some way or other felt the weight of Gods hand; and as we say, *Ictus Piscator sapit*; and it is natural for a child that hath been once smartly whipped, to fear the hand of the Father or the Master a second time: So it is for the child of God, having once felt the weight of Gods hand, he trembleth at every lifting of it up, whether it be against himself or others. Now it is true; the natural fear of a meerly carnal man, as well as the reverential fear of the child of God, will discover it self upon this occasion, and it may offer a foundation of a new question; *How that reverential fear of God in his judicial dispensations, which is, and ought to be found in a child of God, may be distinguished from that slavish and astonishing terrour, which may fall upon the vilest persons in the world.* Let me have your patience to add a word or two to this, before I shut up this branch of Application.

1. In the first place, take a carnal man, who hath in him no more than a natural dread of God, he is *seldom* or *never affected at the lifting up of the hand of God*; only when

when it *falls down heavy upon himself.* Look as men in correcting their children, they *lift up their hands*, first (in order to their stroke) so the great God is set out to us in Scripture. Take the vilest of men; they tremble when the hand of the Lord is upon them in some remarkable judgement, that they feel the smart of Gods Rod; but they seldom take notice of Gods hand *lifted up*, *Isa.* 26. 11. *Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see; but they shall see, &c.* There are three waies by which Gods hand may be said to be lifted up.

1. *In the comminations of his Word applied by his Messengers.* God in his Word hath revealed his wrath plentifully against sinners. Now it is Gods usual method (especially as to Nations, and such Nations where the Name of God hath been published) as of old to raise up his Prophets to give people warning; so more lately to raise up some *Ministers* amongst such a people, faithfully and powerfully to apply the threatnings of Gods Word to such a people. Now here Gods hand is lifted up: This now the child of God that truly feareth him, will see and take notice of, and suit himself accordingly. You see it in the instances of almost all the good Kings of *Judah.* But others will not see this lifting up of Gods hand. *Jeroboam* stretcheth out his hand against the *Prophet.* *Ahab* commands *Elijah* to prison; and so doth *Zedekiah* serve the Prophet *Jeremiah.*

2. Again, the hand of God may be said to be

lifted up, when God ſendeth either ſome ſuffer judgements, as fore-runners of greater; or elſe by ſome ſigns in nature doth indicare iram, declare his wrath. Now this lifting up again of the Lords hand, the natural man will not ſee. There is that which God chargeth the Jews with, by his Prophet *Amos, ch.* 4. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11. God ſometimes ſhews his *ſigns in the Heavens,* and alters the courſe of nature, as an indication of his wrath. Of this nature was the *Eccliſpe* at our Saviours death; the *Enſis flammivomus,* ſeen hanging over *Hieruſalem*; many *prodigious Comets,* and other ſigns taken notice of by all Hiſtories, before Gods eminent pouring out of his wrath upon a place. Take now a child of God, when he ſees theſe things, he is afraid, though he dare not venture to give *a particular judgement of them*; yet they make him to tremble and reverence God, as believing he is doing ſome terrible work, &c.

3. A third way whereby Gods hand may be ſaid to be *lifted up* againſt a perſon or Nation, is, *when God makes ſome other like ſinners examples of his vengeance.* Our Saviour taught us this, when he made to his Diſciples that improvement of the *Judgement of God* fallen upon the *Galileans,* and upon thoſe upon whom the *Tower of Siloam fell*; telling the people, that *except they repented, they ſhould all likewiſe periſh.* Now a man or woman truly fearing God, takes notice of theſe liftings up of Gods hand, and fears; but uſually another never trembleth till the vengeance of God

God overtakes himself; he puts the evil day far from him, and will give no heed to such lesser judgements, as usually forerun greater; nor yet will he take notice of any signs of Gods approaching wrath; nor mind the beginnings of it upon others. But this is but the first thing, and not universally in all points true. But

2. Secondly, If he doth at all take notice of any of these things, *he feareth with a superstitious, or with a meer servile fear.* Fear much prevails according to the *natural constitutions.* Persons naturally *melancholick*, are prone exceedingly to fear; and where you find natural men thus complexioned, it is not extraordinary to find them affrighted sometimes at the signs or beginnings of Divine Vengeance: but one of these two faults their fear hath: It is either 1. *Superstitious:* Or 2. *Meerly slavish. Superstitious*, without any ground at all from the words of God. Such are these fears raised by *Astrologers*, and *Stargazers*, and vain observers. Thus it is given as the character of a wicked man, *That he feareth where no fear is*, *Psal.* 53. 5. *i. e.* where there is no true ground of fear, no true and just ground. And *Prov.* 28. 1. *He fleeth when none pursueth him.* Or else, 2. *His fear is a meer servile fear*, and that in a very great excess. God threatens his people, that in case they were found disobedient, *he would send a faintness upon their hearts, and the sound of a shaken leaf should chase them.* And such ordinarily is that fear of Judgement which

Psal. 53. 5.

Lev. 26. 36.

which falls upon the hearts of natural carnal men: Or if not a *judicial punishment*; yet a meer excess of natural passion.

3. *Though a natural man may fear Divine Judgements; yet his fear never brings him closer to God.* A carnal mans fear of Gods Judgements, hath many effects upon him, and those very various, according to the different temper of persons. Some are made by it *desperate*, and to defie the God of Heaven; as *Julian* the Apostate (they say) threw up his Dagger to Heaven, and cried, *Vicisti Galilee*, Thou hast overcome me O thou *Galilean*. Others, their fear hath such an influence upon, that (like those rebellious *Israelites*, *Jer.* 42.) they will presently resolve to remove from that place which God makes the Theatre of his Judgements. Thus in times of *Plague*, or other *contagious Diseases*, or *War*, they will remove from their habitations. Yea, though upon a rational view of things, a prudent man would see no great cause for it. *Fear* upon others hath such an effect as *Nabals* fear had upon him, to kill him: his heart upon it (saith the text) grew *dead as a stone*. Others, it may be their fear hath an influence upon, to bring them to some *hypocritical humiliation*. So *Ahabs* fear made him *walk softly*, and *put on sackcloth*. But the fear of Judgements never hath such an operation upon a meer carnal man, as to make him take up any serious thoughts of searching what the quarrel is which God hath against him, and throughly humbling himself

himself before God for his sins, which have been the cause of his wrath, and to turn from them by any serious resolutions, or indeavours after reformation. This was the influence that *Josiahs* fears had upon him. Indeed you shall see the difference betwixt the best of natural men in their fears of Judgements, and the child of God, in those two instances of *Ahab* and *Josiah*. *Ahab* was a most wretched Prince; God sends a Prophet to him, 1 *King.* 21. 19, 20, 21. to tell him (in short) that God would ruine him and his family, and all that belonged to him, *v.* 27. *Ahab* hears those words, *he rends his cloths, puts sackcloth upon his flesh, fasteth, lyeth in sackcloth, and goes softly.* Here's the best of a carnal man; if his dread of God in his Judgements, worketh thus far, and to a temporary abstaining from some gross sins, it is all; you read not a word of *Ahabs* tending to inquire of the Lord; not a word of any *Gondial humiliation*, or *real reformation*, 2 *King.* 22. 11. *Josiah* findeth the Book of the Law, and heareth there of the wrath of God, *he rends his cloths* (so did *Ahab*) but he resteth not here, *v.* 13. *He tends to inquire of the Lord for him, and for the people, and for all Judah, &c.* was this all? No, *chap.* 23. *He sets upon a real and effectual reformation with all his might.* Thus you see how the dread and awe of God upon the heart of a child of God, doth not drive him from God, but unto him; it doth not stupifie, but quicken him; it doth not put him

upon

upon a *formal, temporary, particular reformation*, but upon a fixed, real, *general reformation*. *Pharaohs* fear startled him, and put him upon sending to *Moses* to pray for him; and put him upon some good thoughts and resolutions at present; but yet *Pharaoh*, notwithstanding this, was one who feared not the Lord. But thus much may serve to have spoken to this branch of Application.

I come now to the last branch: I will shut up this discourse with a few words of Exhortation. I will reduce all to three particulars.

1. *To such as have not this fear of God in their hearts, to perswade them to labour for it.* Exhort.

2. *To such as have this fear of God, to perswade them* 1. *To labour to grow in this habit and exercise.* 2. *To live like excellent persons*; and to shew they have this excellent blessing.

3. Lastly, To the men of the world in general; to perswade them,

1. *To an undervaluing of all other excellencies.*

2. *To a true value of this excellent thing, and these excellent persons.*

3. *To give them of the fruit of their hands, and to suffer their works to praise them in the gates.*

In the first place; let me press a word of Exhortation upon such as yet fear not God, to perswade them to it. It is a frequent precept in holy Writ, *Levit.* 19. 14. *Fear thy* 1 Branch.

God,

God, I am the Lord, ch. 25. *v.* 17. 43. *Eccles.* 5. 7. *Matth.* 10. 28. 1 *Pet.* 2. 17. *Rev.* 14. 7. *Eccles.* 12. 13. God calls to you, *Fear God. Solomon* calls to you, *Fear God.* Our Saviour calls to you, *Fear him that can cast both body and soul into Hell fire.* The Angels in Heaven call to you, *Fear God.* All the Prophets and Apostles call to you *unâ voce*, and this is that which they say, *Fear God.* The meaning of this you have heard. Not only dread the great and living God in the secrets of your hearts; but let all your conversation savour of this fear: so comport your selves in your whole carriage both towards God, and towards your neighbours, as you may evidence to the world, not only that you have a natural sense of that infinite distance which is between your Creatour and you, and the power that he hath over you; but that you may shew that you have this gracious habit of fear wrought in you, and that you fear God in the Scripture phrase. You see this is a great piece of the will of God concerning you, pressed upon you again and again in holy Writ. Give me leave to inlarge a little in pressing it upon you. I shall first give you some Arguments. Secondly, I shall offer you some directions in the case, from the text: And what I have said, furnisheth me with two great Arguments.

1. *This is Wisdom. This is Grace, Job* 28. 28. *The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, Prov.* 1. 7. *The fear of the Lord is the beginning of Knowledge.* That man who hath nothing of the fear

fear of God in him, hath nothing of God, nothing of the Grace of God in him. On the other side, that person who hath in him *the fear of God*, hath all; that is an holy, that is a gracious man. There can be no more said of any, than that he or she are persons *not fearing God*. Nor can there be *better* said of any, that he or she is a person fearing God.

2. Secondly, (You have heard) a person fearing God, is *the most excellent person in the world*; *Favour is deceitful, Beauty is vain, but a woman fearing the Lord, she shall be praised.* Others may call themselves *excellent*; and the men of the world may call the *proud happy*; but the truly happy, the truly excellent person is one fearing God. I might add a third.

3. *This is the only person who deserveth to be praised, and whose works will truly praise him.* Let others be commended and admired for beauty, for riches and honour; and another for learning; as the end of all is, *to fear God, and keep his Commandments*; So that person that truly answereth this end, and doth fear God, and keep his Commandments, will upon the best evidence, (which is that of Scripture and reason) appear to be the person that is most worthy of *praise and commendation.* Now if I could say no more than this, to engage any to this study; yet in other things this would be enough. Every one naturally desireth the things that are excellent, and is naturally covetous of honour and praise. Would you have that which is in it

self most excellent? that which will make you above all others excellent? that which most truly deserveth praise, and will make you the truest objects of praise? Oh get this fear of the Lord! Give me leave to add another Argument or two.

4. In the fourth place, *Consider the many Promises made in Scripture to the fear of the Lord*, Prov. 10. 27. *The fear of the Lord prolongeth dayes*, Prov. 14. 26, 27. *In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence, and his children shall have a place of refuge. The fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death*, Prov. 15. 16. *Little with the fear of the Lord is great gain*, v. 33. *The fear of the Lord is the instruction of wisdom*, Prov. 19. 23. *The fear of the Lord tendeth to life*, ch. 22. 4. *By the fear of the Lord are riches*, Psal. 112. & Psal. 128. are full of Promises to *the man that feareth God*. The things promised in these, and those many other Promises annexed to *the fear of the Lord*, are such as every one desireth. Who would not have *long life, riches* and *honour*? Either you believe the Scriptures, or you do not believe them; if you believe the Scriptures to be the Word of God, you must assent to whatsoever Propositions are revealed in them, as Propositions of eternal and infallible truth, whether the Proposition be *dogmatical, or promissory, &c.* And indeed if you do believe, you cannot but judge your selves reasonably engaged to labour for this fear of the Lord which shall most certainly have such a train of blessings waiting upon it.

5. I will

5. I will add one thing more; *There is no such preservative from all evil both of sin and punishment.* Evil of punishment is sensible evil. Evil of sin is the greater evil, but not so obvious to sense, while the poor creature liveth here. As to the former (the evil of sin) there's no such preservative against that, *Prov.* 16. 6. *By the fear of the Lord men depart from evil.* It is of the nature of fear well rooted in the heart, to lay a restraint upon us, from provoking the person of whose power we are afraid. And 'tis impossible that a soul should truly fear God, and yet boldly, knowingly, and deliberately provoke him to vengeance. There is no such preservative from the evil of sin, as the fear of the Lord is. Nor is there any such preservative from *evils of punishment.* This indeed followeth upon the other; for all punishment is the fruit of sin, *Prov.* 28. 14. *Happy is the man that feareth alway: but he that hardneth his heart shall fall into mischief.* It is not, *he that feareth alway*, but *he that hardneth his heart that falleth into mischief.* I shall add but one thing more.

6. Lastly, *There is no such remedy against the slavish fear of the creature*, as this filial and reverential fear of God. *Isa.* 7. You shall find *v.* 3. That God sent the Prophet to meet *Ahaz:* His business was to incourage him, and to deliver him from the fear of the two potent adversaries, *Rezin* and *Pekah*, *chap.* 8. *v.* 13. (saith he) *Sanctifie the Lord of Hosts himself; and let him be your fear, and let him be your dread.* So our Saviour, Mat. 10. 28.

dread. And indeed it is but a reasonable thing. A greater fear doth as naturally swallow up a lesser, as a greater pain (of the Stone, or the like) drowneth the lesser, and causeth it hardly to be discerned. Now this is no small advantage, *The bondage of fear*, which in this life we are subject to, is no small bondage; and it is no small blessing to be delivered from it. But let this be enough to have spoken by way of motive, to perswade people to this *fear of Jehovah.*

I have spoken so much concerning the excellent habit, that me-thinks I cannot but in charity judge there is by this time kindled in your hearts some desires after it, and hear you whispering; How should I get this fear of the Lord? In order to it, let me commend to you something of *Meditation, Observation, Caution, Faith, Prayer.*

1. The first thing is *Meditation*; as to which in this case, let me commend to you a double Object; *The Word of God: The Works of God.*

Deut. 4. 10. *The Word of God*, Deut. 4. 10. *I will make them to hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the daies they shall live.* The holy Scriptures (as to the matter of them) have much in them, which hath a natural tendency to affect the hearts of men and women with this dread of God.

1. They tell you *what God is*; what a great and glorious *Majesty*; what a *pure and holy God* he is; what a *just and severe God* he is: How infinite his Power is, that he *killeth and saveth*

saveth alive whomsoever he pleaseth; throws to Hell, and brings to Heaven whom he pleaseth, from whence every rational soul must necessarily conclude the subjection of his poor feeble nature unto him; and this apprehension, as to any thing, is the foundation of fear in us: I mean, of all reverential and servile fear. They likewise tell you what God is in his Goodness and Mercy, and the apprehension of this is the foundation of all filial fear.

2. They tell you *what God hath revealed that he will be, and shew himself to be*, both to all impenitent and presumptuous sinners, and to all those who are his children. And

3. They tell you much *what God hath been towards all sorts in the ancient issues of his Providence*. Now I would have you not only to read these, but to *meditate on them*. Meditation is the souls *stand* upon its object; its weighing of matter proposed, and attention to it. The want of this is one great cause there is so little dread of God in the world. Have not men the Scriptures? What house is there amongst us, in which are not many Bibles? Do they not read them? many do, but they do it in a vain formality, without a due digestion and meditation, so as the notions of holy Writ leave no impression upon their hearts. Would men but allow the Word to have a place in their hearts; did the Word of God dwell in them, it were impossible (one would think) but this savour of it should be left behind; men could

could not talk and walk as they do.

2. Let the *Works of God* be also the matter of your *meditation*. *Come and see* (saith the Psalmist) *what desolations he hath wrought in the earth.* The truth is, the wheel of Providence hath turned so strangely in the world, since the world had an existence, that if men could give themselves leisure to think of its motions, to consider them in their causes, in the manner of their revolution, in the things brought to pass by them; one would think it impossible but that it should affect their hearts with a dread of the Divine Majesty: But of this more by and by.

2. The second thing which I shall commend to you, is, *Observation*. Observation of the *motions of Providence*. I remember it is reported of *Waldus*, the Father of those famous Christians the *Waldenses*, that he was converted, by seeing the sudden death of one of his companions in the dates of his vanity. Would we but observe, how *Providence* is every day ratifying the Promises; cutting of *blood-thirsty and deceitful men*, *who*, he hath said, *shall not live out half their dates*; bringing the Councils of *Ahithophels* to folly; striking sinners dead in their full career of sin, and sending them down in a moment to the pit, and many other ways, then could not but fear that great and glorious Name: but we see, and do not see. These, and such like examples are daily before our eyes, and we observe them not, and therefore we *fear not God*. Christians, if you would fear God, observe

observe the workings of his Providence much; how in his great works he is daily confirming his Promises to his people, and his threatnings to his enemies. If the Word of God will not make you fear him; yet surely his works must: his works by which you see him justifying, and giving a Being to his Word.

3. If you would get this *fear of God*, *take heed of those things which have a direct tendency to harden your hearts from his fear.*

1. Take heed first of *Atheistical Principles.* There is a bundle of Principles (some of which have grown too fast too in these evil times) which are calculated for the very Meridian of Atheism; and devised as if it had been on purpose to banish all dread of God out of mens hearts. *That things are not ordered by Providence*, but come in a *meer series and succession of necessary, natural causes. That there are no Spirits: no such things as indications of divine wrath. That there is no Judgement to be made from Providences.* If we should see the Earth open and swallow up *Corah, Dathan* and *Abiram*; yet there is nothing to be concluded, but these may be as honest men as those that do not *go down quick into the pit.* These, and such like Principles, are Doctrines devised on purpose, to make men *faces of Brass*, that they might not *blush*; and *necks of Iron*, that they might not bow at any divine rebukes; but might *out-face God* to the utmost, until he tear them in pieces, and there be none to deliver.

2. Secondly, *Take heed of customary sinning*

against God. Frequency in sin taketh away the sense of it; and a custom of daring God, makes men to forget all kind of fear and dread of the Divine Majesty. Sin naturally hardens the heart; and takes away all natural modesty.

4. Fourthly, Nothing so contributes to *fear* as *faith*. Both *faith of assent*, and *faith of adherence*. Faith of assent is that habit by which we give assent to the Proposition of the word. *Faith of Reliance* is a *gracious habit*, by which *we rest upon the person of the Mediatour*. Either of these hath an influence upon us to beget this fear and dread of God in our souls. The one as it perswades us of the truth of what the Scripture reveals concerning the *Glory* and *Majesty* of God; concerning his *Purity* and *Holiness*; concerning his *Justice* and *Severity*; all which represent God unto us as the true and proper object of our fear. The other, as it uniteth us to Christ; and endeareth him to our souls, and so layeth us under a sacred awe of sinning against him: as we naturally fear to offend any person whom we dearly and intirely love and honour. It is true the Apostle saith, *Rom.* 8. *We have not received the spirit for bondage again to fear.* And again, *Perfect love casteth out fear.* But those texts must be understood, not of a *filial, reverential fear*; but of a *slavish servile fear*; our daily experience teacheth us, that the more intirely we love any person, the more we fear to offend and grieve them, and to do any thing which we think

think they will take ill at our hands. Faith therefore, as it is the root of hope and love; so it is the kindest root of *filial and ingenuous fear.*

5. Lastly, Beg this *Grace of God.* It is a plant of our heavenly Fathers; it is a part of Gods Covenant. *I will put my fear into their heart, that they shall never depart from me.* O beg of God that he would bestow his *fear upon you.* The fear of God is *prima gratia,* saith *Bernard, totius Religionis exordium* ——*radix est custos omnium bonorum, i. e.* The fear of the Lord is the first grace; the very beginning of all Religion; the root and the keeper of all good things: therefore pray that above all things God would bestow this grace upon your souls. But I shall add no more to the first branch of the Exhortation.

Let me in the next place speak to you in whom God hath created this fear of his great and glorious Name. Two things this Doctrine calleth to you for.

1. *To grow in this excellent habit.*
2. *To live like excellent persons.*

1. *Labour to grow in this excellent habit.* There is a *fear of God,* in which the more perfect a Christian is, the more he decreaseth in it. This is that *servile and slavish fear* which I mentioned dreading God, *as a Judge, an Enemy, one that can cast both body and soul into Hell fire.* The more a soul grows up into communion with God, and into an assurance of union with him; the more this *fear*

dieth,

dieth, and weareth out of its soul. It is a *dread of God* which attendeth the *Spirit of bondage*, and much possesseth the soul in the moment of its conversion; and wears off as the soul comes to receive the *Spirit of Adoption, teaching it to cry Abba Father; and groweth more perfect in Love.* But there is another fear, which, as the soul groweth more perfect in love, and in the exercise of grace; the more this groweth up, and increaseth in the soul; this is that *fearing of the Lord and his goodness*, of which the Scripture speaks. Such a fear as the tender wife *fears* her husband with; and the dutiful child its Parent, who (he knows) intirely loves him: he feareth not his Fathers rod, but he fears his frown; he fears the change of his countenance towards him. This is that habit of fear in which I would have you to grow.

2. And as in this habit; so *in the performance of all acts and exercises, by which you may testifie this your reverencing of the great God of Heaven and Earth.* The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (saith *Solomon*) it is both the beginning and the perfection of it. The fear of the Lord is a grace necessary at all times, especially in *evil times*. *Cyril* saith, that the soul that is full of the fear of the Lord, *velut muro obsepta fortis est*, is strong as a City guarded with a wall, and in a manner invincible.

2. This Doctrine calleth to you *to live like excellent persons.* I hinted the reason of this before; *every one should live humbly to his honour*

honour and dignity. Persons fearing God are the *most excellent persons*; they should therefore live like the excellent of the Earth, distinguishing themselves from others *by their lives*, as God hath distinguished them *by his favour.* But I have hinted this before; and therefore shall not here inlarge upon that discourse.

I have but one word more to add, *That is to the men of the world in general.* To them I shall speak (from the advantage of what you have heard) for three things.

1. *To undervalue other excellencies in comparison with this.* Learn to speak after *Solomon*; *Favour is deceitful. Beauty is vain. Riches* commend not a soul to God; they *profit not in the day of wrath.* Why should you *set your eyes upon things that are not*; and admire things that have nothing of worth in them, proportioned to your affection to them, admiration of them, pursuit after them. *Knowledge* is a fine thing; by it a man differs from a beast. *Wisdom* and *Moral Vertues* are excellent things; by these things men outshine men, and excel each other, as light excelleth darkness: But what are all these to the *fear of the Lord?* O then let these things ride but in the second Chariot: let the fear of God in the throne of your estimation be greater than they are. Remember, nothing so much betraies your intellectuals, as want of judgement in things that differ; and your judgement cannot but be erroneous, where it is contrary to the judgement of God, and of

holy

holy men who spake in Scripture as they were inspired by God.

2. Let what you have heard *bespeak a due value (in you) both of the fear of the Lord, as the best thing, and persons fearing the Lord as the most excellent persons.* Certainly it is but reasonable that we should judge of persons, and things, as *God judgeth* of them; as *Solomon* and *David*; and those great Worthies we find recorded in Scripture have judged. *David, Psal.* 16. calleth the people of God, The *excellent of the Earth. Solomon* tells you here, that *Favour is deceitful*, and *Beauty is vain*: but a *woman fearing the Lord, she shall be praised. Though many Daughters have done vertuously, yet she hath ascended above them all.* Oh let us thus judge. Regard not what *vain men* talk of people fearing God: they speak after their *Father* (whose works they do) they do but disgorge the prophaneness, filth and malice of their own hearts: They have hated Christ, and no wonder if they hate all those who bear any thing of the *Image* and *superscription*. Let not the railings of these men; let not their hard speeches, and bitter censures, and more bitter dealings, guide your judgement. You will one day find, that the men whom they thus abuse, are no Reprobates. Men in *power* and *authority* one day will know, that these are not these *evil doers*, to whom they should be a terrour. *Ministers* will know that they have abused their texts, to turn the drift of them against persons fearing the Lord; under the disguise of *Schismaticks, Fanaticks*,

Fanaticks, &c. terms which many uſe in theſe daies, not underſtanding what they mean. If it be ſome mens *worldly intereſt* to do theſe things; yet (my *Brethren*) take you heed of treading their ſteps. Let who will revile, and curſe, and *blaſpheme*. God hath bleſſed the perſons that fear him; and you ſhall one day ſee *they ſhall be bleſſed*. *Behold the Lord cometh* (ſaith the Apoſtle *Jude*) *with ten thouſand of his Saints, to execute Judgement upon all; and to convince all that are ungodly amongſt them, of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed; and of all their hard ſpeeches which ungodly ſinners have ſpoken againſt him.* Jude v. 15.

Laſtly, Are perſons *fearing the Lord*, the moſt excellent perſons? *give them then the fruit of their hands, and let their own works praiſe them in the gates.* It is *Solomons* improvement of this notion in the words following my text. Certainly there is nothing more reaſonable than this is; if it were, give ſuch perſons as theſe the *fruit of your hands*: it were but according to the manner of men, who uſe to give *Preſents* to Princes Favourites. It were but *to make friends of your Mammon of unrighteouſneſs, that when theſe things fail, you may be received into everlaſting habitations.* But I ſay no more than *give them the fruit of their hands*; do not *defraud, abuſe them*; give them that honour, that room in the world which they deſerve, which they labour for; *and let their own works praiſe them in the gates.* Envy them not the

praiſe

praise of their own labours; the honour which their own *works purchase for them.*

This brings me to my last part of my work; that I may fulfil my text upon this *Noble* person, for whom we are all mourners. But I shall reserve that to a more full and particular discourse.

LIGHT

LIGHT IN DARKNESS:

OR,

A twofold *Fountain* of *Comfort* and *Satisfaction*, to those, who walking with God, yet live, and may die unsatisfied, as to the sensible manifestations of *DIVINE LOVE:*

Discovered,

In a Discourse first Preached at the Funerals of the *Right Honourable*, the *Lady Catharine Courten*; late Wife to *William Courten*, Esq; and since inlarged for more publick profit.

By *John Collinges*, (late) Preacher of the Gospel in *Norwich*.

Isaiah 50. 20. *Who is amongst you that feareth the Lord? and obeyeth the voice of his servant; that walketh in darkness, and seeth no light? let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.*

LONDON, Printed in the year, 1669.

To His Worthy and Honoured Friend, William Courten, Esq.

Sir,

Hen I had once resolved to joyn these sheets (long since drawn up, and in the hands of some of your noble friends) in one Book with those, relating to your Noble Aunt; *I had no great dispute with my self, to whom (according to the usual custom) I should inscribe them. You are the only* Male Branch *of this* excellent Root; *the Heir of her* Religion, Vertue *and* Honour; *you were (while she lived) next to your* dear Father, *the great object of her* Love, Care, *and* Pious Solli-

tude: *For you it was that she so often, so passionately (even in her greatest Agonies) begg'd our prayers; she had you only, and your Sister to pour out sighs and tears to God for, that you might be found constant, and walking in the truth. You alone can lay a just claim to her* picture, *and these other Papers devoted to a memorial of her. You are fittest to undertake the Patronage of her* Honourable and Precious Name, *against such, as (to justifie others) would fasten a* Debauchery *in Religion upon her* Urn, *after fifteen or sixteen years rest, in which, since her death, it might prescribe; for the Faith in which she not only truly died, but in so eminent a Profession, and such particular Declarations of it, as are not ordinary. (Alas! (Dear Sir) for the sad occasion of this so late an impudent slander, but the judgements of God are a great deep) You Sir, since her death, have been visiting the* seat of iniquity, *the Country of the* great Whore, *which hath made so many drunk, and is yet by parcels intoxicating souls with her superstitious and idolatrous abomi-*

abominations; you went not out of curiosity, but upon a just call, and to pay a duty to your Fathers Sepulchre. Had your rare Mother lived till you took that Journey, she would have cryed out with another kind of Devotion than Horace *for his friend* Virgil.

Sic te cunctipotens Deus
Sic pelagi Dominus——
Ventorumque regat Pater
Obstrictis aliis præter——
Naves quæ tibi creditum
Debes——finibus Italis
Reddas incolumem, precor
Et serves animæ dimidium meæ.

But it pleased God (by death seven years before) to deliver her from those fears, *in which your two years* absence *would have kept her: and though she lived not so long as to attend you with her fervent prayers; yet Sir, I can tell you, she had treasured up a large stock of prayers for you; and she had begg'd a moving stock, which was working for you, when she ceased to be; and by the infinite goodness of God*

hearing those prayers, you were preserved, both in your going and coming, in the perils you ran by Land, *and* by Sea: *You and preserved also free from those sensual and superstitious tinctures, which too too many bring home with them. You have (dear Sir) made it appear in your practice, that the fopperies of the* Romish Religion, *are baits fit for no noble and ingenuous souls, nor any that have once seen them in their proper element: You have had an ocular demonstration of the folly that attends it, and the licentious* leudness tolerated *and* patronized *by it: and while others in a Land of Righteousness have learned wickedness; and from the very Tents of* Protestants *have proved* Renegadoes *to the Faith, makeing* shipwrack both of it and a good conscience: *You have defied the* Babilonish Whore *in her very* bed of filthiness; *and been* faithful *where* Satan *hath his Throne,* treading upon the Lion and the Adder, *and (without harm)* trampling the young Lion under your feet. *'Tis (Sir) I hope, because* the Lord hath set his love upon you, that he hath delivered you;

and

and he will set you on high, because you have known his Name. *Go on* (dear and honoured Sir) *to make the* fear *of your Parents to be* your fear; *to love that* dear Saviour, *whom above all the world, your* dying Mother *begged for your portion.* (*You must, Sir, give me leave chiefly to insist upon the mention of your Mother* (*you know she alone was known to me so much as by face.*) *Go on Sir, to justifie her interest in Heaven, by making it appear that her prayers were for you heard and accepted. Let all her* Vertues *and* Graces *be read in your holy conversation. When she came to die* (*though it was in the prime of her years*) *it was no grief of heart unto her, that she had consecrated her life to God, and early drawn off her self from the perishing vanities of the world. I can assure you Sir, she never repented her of one of those very many hours which she had spent in prayers and tears on the behalf of her, and your immortal soul; or which she had spent in reading the Word of God, or in* hearing of it preached in season, and out of season. *I speak this, not Sir, as in the least suspecting your forgetfulness of* the

Law, *or the* life of your Mother; *but you can never enough remember her*; *and* (*as the* Apostle *speaketh*) *I only* desire to stir up your mind by way of remembrance. *I hope* (dear Sir) *you will please to pardon my offers of these Papers to you: I have told you your interest in them*; *and though they be but an inconsiderable Present, yet your ingenuity will inforce your acceptance of them from him, who* (*under his present circumstances*) *knows not better how to improve himself:*

Sir,
Your most affectionate
Friend and Servant,

J. C.

LIGHT

LIGHT in DARKNESS.

PSALM 17. 15.

But as for me, I will behold thy face in Righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake, (or in watching) for thy likeness.

THE life of a Saint lies in *contemplation* and *action*: Contemplation, what God is in himself; and what he is unto him: And *spiritual action*, doing what lies in his power for God. The *triumphing Saint* beholdeth the face of God continually; and this is the *militant Saints object* too; but with this difference: The *Saint triumphant beholdeth* the face of God in *glory*: The *Saint militant* beholdeth his face in *duty*: The one in *Happiness*; the other in *Righteousness*: The former sees him *face to face*, clearly: these see him, but it is *in a glass, darkly*: The former see him *as he*

Psal. 27. 4. 1 Cor. 13. 12. 1 Joh. 3 2.

he is; the latter, *as he will please to reveal himself*, and as they are *able to comprehend him*; yet both of them *behold his face*; the one by *faith*, the other by *sight*: And the way to behold the Lords face *in glory*, is first (with the Psalmist) *to behold his face in Righteousness*.

Satisfaction to our minds, is the greatest blessing we are capable of; and indeed the portion of none but Gods people, who have an object in God, proportioned to the capacity of their souls. Other souls may be filled with *wind*; but these only with wholesome food: Yea and every gracious soul hath it for his portion, though in different degrees, and from different accounts. The Saints in glory *see and are satisfied*. The children of God in this life *believe, and are satisfied*: both are *satisfied*; the one from *Faith*, the other from *Sight*: the one from the *evidence* of things *not seen*; the other from the *glory* and *fulness* of things which *are seen*: Those in Heaven, with *waiting* upon God; these on Earth, with *watching* for *Gods likeness*. The living Saints *satisfaction* is not so full as his, *whose corruptible hath put on incorruption*. In some things he may be unsatisfied, yea and go down to his grave in that *dissatisfaction*, having received no other satisfaction from God, but what he hath found in the *performance of his duty*: but if he doth so fall asleep, yet he *shall awake*; and *when he awakes*, he shall *be satisfied* with the *divine likeness*. So saith the Psalmist, *When I awake,*

I shall

I shall be satisfied with thy likeness. I think it needless to dispute whether *David* was the Author of this *Psalm*, or no. A critical Expositor notes, that some Greek Copies seem to favour another opinion, reading the title of it, A *Psalm to*, or *for David*. The *Hebrew* affix, though it gives a latitude to such a conjecture; yet it no way necessitates such a construction, being indifferently used to express the *Genitive* as the *Dative* Case. It is generally agreed to be a *Psalm* of *David*; and the title is no other, than that of other *Psalms*, which were unquestionably penned by him. *Lorinus ad loc.* τῷ Δαβὶδ לְדָוִד

Interpreters cannot agree the *particular time* or *occasion* of the composure: Some of the Hebrew Writers affirm it composed at that time when *Rabbah* of the *Ammonites* was besieged by *Joab* as *Captain General* of *Davids* Army (the story of which you read, 2 *Sam.* 12.) But as I see no foundation for that conjecture; so I have this to offer against it; That *David* at that time being settled upon his Throne, and able to spare an Army to invade his enemies; it is probable he had not so many, nor so considerable enemies as he seems to complain of in this Psalm. *V. Vicars ad loc.*

But leaving that disquisition, the matter of the *Psalm* seems to us more considerable.

Who so wistly casteth an eye upon it, will find it *representing a child of light in darkness*; the man according to Gods own heart, under a very great *eclipse* as to the *light of his countenance*; and that not only with respect

to

to more *external Providences*; but also as to more *internal influences*. He had *enemies* from *without*, *v.* 9. The wicked *oppressed him*, *deadly enemies compassed him about*. *They spake proudly*, *v.* 10. *They compassed him in his steps*, *v.* 11. *They were to him like Lions, and young Lions*, *v.* 11, 12. As to *internal influences*, his condition was sad: He knew not what God would do with him, *v.* 2. He prayes, *Let my sentence come forth from thy presence*. He had not lately heard from God, but prayes for an answer of his prayers, *v.* 1, 2, 6. *Attend unto my cry*; *give ear unto my prayer*, *&c.* He was under a *great temptation*, being *poor* and *empty*, when his enemies were both *rich* and *full*, *v.* 14. The text speaks him under some *dissatisfaction*. This makes it probable, that this *Psalm* was composed during his *persecution* by *Saul*, or *disturbances* from the *rebellion of Absolom*; and most likely it was during the latter period of time, he being then more under the *eclipse of divine light*, by reason of his *sin*, which had occasioned him those great disturbances of his life, according to what *Nathan* told him from God. This was his state; what now doth he in this perplexity? 1. He *prayes*. 2. He *believes*. *Athanasius* noteth right, that this Psalm is full of *faith*. In the text you have the holy mans resolution in this great streis of Providence; *As for me*, *I will behold thy face in righteousness*, *&c.* You have in the text,

1. *Davids Resolution*; *I will behold thy face in righteousness*.

2. *Davids*

2. *Davids Incouragement and Satisfaction*; *I shall be satisfied when I awake* (or in watching for) *with thy likeness.*

It will be necessary I should spend some time in opening the words; for we shall find some difficulty in them, and that (like Spices) when they are bruised, they will send forth a more fragrant smell. After that I shall raise such Observations as are clear in the words; and pitch upon some of them for the subject of my discourse.

But as for me] These words which make the *Antithesis*, are not in the *Hebrew*; but it is plain, that they, or some others of like import, must be supplied, to make up the sense according to our *English Idiome*; for it is evident, that there is a latent *Antithesis* in these words; *David* declaring his *resolution* and *satisfaction*, in opposition to that of his wicked enemies, mentioned, *v.* 14. *Their bellies were filled with hid treasure; they had their portion in this life; they were full of children, and left the rest to their babes*; this satisfied them. But [*as for me*] (saith *David*) if I had all these things; if I were full of *riches*, full of *treasure*, it would not satisfie me. *Piscator* parallels it with that of *David*, *Psal.* 4. 6. *There be many who will say, shew us any good; Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon me.* So here; Let the wicked enjoy their portions in this life; let their bellies be filled with their hid treasure; let them have a plenty of substance, and leave the rest to their babes; and let them if they will walk proudly;

Antithesis est qua David opponit spem suam spei impiorum. Mollerius. *V. Musc. Westmerum, Engl. Annot. Piscat. ad loc.*

Psal. 4. 6.

Frustur improbi suis bonis, &c. Lorinus *ad loc.*

As

As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness.

Ver. 15. I] I find some questioning whether the *Psalmist* speaks this of himself, or of some other. *Hierom* thinks that he speaks of *Christ*: He indeed first beheld his Fathers face in righteousness, and it is in him that we can so behold it: he also was the *first fruits of them that sleep*, and awaking in the Resurrection, he was satisfied with his *Fathers likeness*. It is eminently true of him; but doubtless, though this text *mystically* may respect Christ, and *morally* concerneth every child of God; yet literally it respecteth *David*, who is first concerned in it.

V. August. ad loc.

Will behold thy face in righteousness] In *righteousness*. The question is, what righteousness here the Psalmist intendeth. If the text were (according to *Hierom*) to be understood of Christ; the *Righteousness* could be no other, than his own *active and passive obedience* to the whole will of God. But I said before, the resolution doubtless is *Davids*; and an analogous resolution is the duty of every true child of God. We must make a further inquiry. This term *Righteousness* is in Scripture taken in several senses; but as applicable to our purpose there is,

1. *A Justifying Righteousness*, by which our souls stand righteous before God: *This righteousness* (saith the Apostle) *is revealed from Faith to Faith.* This is called the *righteousness which is of God*; and our *righteousness* Christs righteousness, as to the personal performance of

Rom. 1. 17.

of it. *Gods righteousness*, as to the imputation of it, it is he *reckoneth it to us for righteousness*; the *righteousness of faith*; as faith is that hand which layeth hold upon it, and applieth. *Ours* as imputed and applied to us. *Surely shall one* Isa. 45.24. *say, in the Lord I have righteousness and strength.* The Prophet *Isaiah* sang of old, *Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.* Thus was the name of Christ prophesied of, *The Lord our Righteousness.* And the Apostle saith, He was made of God for us, *Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification* and *Redemption.* And St. *Paul* 1 Cor. 1.30. *desireth to be found in Christ, not having his own righteousness, but that which is of God.* Indeed in this *Righteousness* alone can we behold the reconciled face of God; either in this life, or that which is to come. God (as *Joseph said to his Brethren, Bring your Brother Benjamin, or see my face no more*) hath said to us ever since the fall; *Bring me the Righteousness of Christ, or see my face no more.* This was that *White Robe* with which *John* in the *Revelations* saw the *Elders clothed*; the meaning was no more than that *they had washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb.* Nor was *David* ignorant of this; it was he that sang of *imputed Righteousness*, *Psal.* 32. 1, 2. Psa. 32.1,2. Saying, *Blessed is he whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered, and to whom the Lord imputeth no sin.* I will not exclude this from the sense of the text. Rev. 7.14.

2. But (secondly) there is also a *Righteousness of Sanctification*; and so *Righteousness* is in Scripture taken either in a more *Legal*,

or

or in a more *Evangelical* notion.

Legal Righteousness lieth in a *perfect fulfilling of the whole Law of God, in thought, word and deed.* The stain of the least sin destroyeth this. *David* cannot mean this. Thus the Apostle tells us, and tells it us out of *David*; *There is none righteous, no not one:* And *David* tells us so much of his sins, as may assure us, this was not in his thoughts. *The righteous falleth seven times in a day; and who can tell how often he offendeth?* *David* knew his own heart too well, to think he had such a proportion of this Web, as would make him a *long white Robe*, wherein to stand before that God *who chargeth his Angels with folly; and is of purer eyes than to behold any iniquity.* The Apostle
Jam. 2.10. saith, *That he who keepeth the whole Law, and offendeth but in one point, is guilty of all.* And surely he who said, *If thou* (Lord)
Psal. 102.3. *shouldst mark iniquity*, O Lord, *who shall stand?* never thought that himself should.

2. *Secondly*, Therefore this *Righteousness of Sanctification* is taken in an *Evangelical sense*, and so it signifies

1. That *universal habit of holiness*, of which the child of God is possessed, teaching him to hate and strive against every sin; to love and to press after every good work; and to endeavour to do the whole will of God: (though it may be in many things he doth offend) and this is that *Righteousness* which the most solid *Interpreters* judge here to be chiefly intended; that which the holy *Psalmist* elsewhere calleth *a respect to all Gods Commandments*,

ments, Psal. 119.6. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I shall have respect to all thy Commandments.* I will not restrain the text to this; but this doubtless is a great part of *Davids* meaning; *I will live an holy and righteous conversation, having a due regard to all thy Commandments; and keeping up in my soul a true hatred of every sin, and of every false way.* Though I want the fulness which sinful men have; though I be in a sad and afflicted condition; though I be in the dark, and cannot behold *the light of thy countenance*; though my oppressors and my enemies be many, and cruel, and bloody; yet will I not live like wicked and ungodly men, who live more at ease, and have a greater degree of fulness; but I will keep on the course of an holy life and conversation, and then I shall *behold thy face* either *here*, or *hereafter*; either before I fall asleep in death; or when I shall awake in the resurrection.

This righteousness then is the *righteousness of a good conscience*; that which Saint *Paul* calls a *living in a good conscience before God.* And again, he tells us, herein he did *exercise himself to keep a conscience void of offence both towards God, and towards men.* Acts 23. 1.

The *Chaldee Paraphrast* reads it, *Truth*; *In truth will I behold thy face. Truth* is opposed to *Hypocrisie*, and to all *falshood* of conversation.

And indeed none can (without presumption) hope to see God, but he who looks to *behold his face in the righteousness of Jesus Christ*

Christ imputed to him. 2. In the *righteousness* of an holy life and *conversation*: *Without holiness* (saith the Apostle) *none shall see God.*

3. But there is yet a *third thing*, which some understand by *righteousness* (in this place) and in other texts is most certainly understood by it. It is the particular habit of *Justice* and *Innocency*, *i. e.* having an *innocent heart*, and a *righteous cause* against unrighteous men. I will come to thee *O God*, who art a *God of Justice*, and a *Protector of innocent persons*. Holy *David* at this time, was afflicted, either by the *persecution of Saul* (as some think) or the rebellion of *Absolom* (as others judge) both of them rose up against him without a cause on their part; not for *my wickedness*, nor for *my sin* (as he elsewhere saith.) Now (saith *David*,) though my enemies be many, and great, and cruel; yet I have done them no harm: I have as to them a righteous heart, and against them a *righteous cause*: I will bring this *righteous cause* before thee. This is the righteousness of which he speaketh, *v.* 3 *Let thine eyes behold the thing that is equal: thou hast proved mine heart: thou hast visited me in the night: thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing.* So probably, *v.* 1. he prayes. *Hear the right O Lord*; (where the same word is used.) This sense will afford us this note.

Alii per justitiam intelligunt innocentiam versus hostes. Lor.

Those who make their appeal to God in any cause, and seek his face, hoping to behold his face, directing, countenancing, or assisting them, must be sure their cause be a righteous cause.

On

One of the Hebrew Writers reads, *I will behold thy face for Alms*; the *Rabbies* so interpret the word פנים because (they say) to give Alms is both a piece of righteousness, and a sign of it: Indeed, whosoever goes to God, goes for *Alms*. But I shall discourse no more as to this term, *In Righteousness*.

1. *In the Righteousness of my Lord*, the Mediatour.

2. *In the Righteousness of an holy conversation.*

3. *In the Justice, Innocency and Righteousness of my cause.* This is all comprehended in the term *Righteousness*. I now proceed.

Will I, or shall I behold thy face?] The word indifferently signifies the act of the body, and of the mind, *Psal.* 58. 10. *The righteous shall rejoyce when he seeth the vengeance*, that is, when he shall with his bodily eyes see the righteous God revenging him upon sinful men, *Exod.* 18. 21. *Thou shalt provide*; there it doubtless implieth an act of *Moses* his *mind, weighing and considering* what persons were *fittest for Magistrates.*

2. But it sometimes signifies not a *bare intuition*, but a most *curious careful scrutiny or beholding.* It signifieth to *contemplate*: Now when a man contemplates, he doth not barely look upon a thing; but he fixeth his eyes, and thoughts, and studies upon it; from this word Prophets, we are called *Seers*; and it is a word often applied to their *vision*, in which their minds were wholly taken up, and their souls as it were wrapt up in ecsta-

sies. *Star-gazers* from this word had their name in *Hebrew*. And Criticks tell us our English word *Gaze*, hath its original from it. Now you know we use that word *Gaze*, to express the action of them, who are a long time looking upon a thing, *fully*, *steadily* and *busily*. Further yet; the word sometimes signifies to behold with *delight* and *pleasure*: *To behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his Temple*, *Psal.* 27. 4. That was a pleasant sight, *Psal.* 84. 1. *I will behold thy face in righteousness*; that is, with the eye of my *body* or *mind*, or both; I will *diligently*, *constantly*, *earnestly* behold; I will take pleasure in beholding.

Thy face.] The word used here signifies any outward *superficies*, or *exterior countenance of a thing*, being applied to God, it signifies the manifestations of divine love, whether in the gracious issues of providence, or in the more inward influences of divine love. God hath neither *essential*, nor *integral parts*, as we have; he hath no head, no hands, no face: these things only agree to God by *analogy*. The face is the more *noble outward* part of a man; most conspicuous, and by which he is most known; in which more than by any part else; a mans temper, and particular inclination and disposition to us is known. So the face of God signifies,

1. *The favour of God in the sensible manifestations of it.* When we are angry, we turn away our faces from our neighbours; and being reconciled again to them, we again look upon

upon them. So is the Lord in Scripture set out to us, *Psal.* 13. *How long wilt thou hide thy face?* So when God is expressed as in favour with, and reconciled to a people, he is set out as turning his face toward them. Hence in Scripture the people of God pray for the favour of God; under this notion, *Psal.* 80. 3. *Cause thy face to shine upon us, and we shall be saved, Psal.* 31. 16. *Make thy face to shine upon us, Psal.* 27. 8. *&c.* In this sense *Cain* spake, *Gen.* 4. 14. *From thy face I shall be hid, (id est)* from thy favour. And it is by some learned Expositors observed, that when the term favour is joyned with *behold*, or *shine*, *&c.* it alwaies thus signifies. Thus *Psal.* 67. 1. *God be merciful unto us, and bless us, and make his face to shine upon us, i. e.* shew us some token for good: this is sometimes called the *light of Gods countenance.* Psal. 13. Psal. 80. 3. 31. 16. 27. 8. Gen. 4. 14.

2. The fear of God sometimes signifies *Gods glorious manifestation to his Saints in Heaven*; where (as the Apostle speaketh) his people shall see him *with open face, face to face, as he is, &c.* 1 Joh. 3. 2. 2 Cor. 3. 16.

I am inclined to understand the phrase in the utmost latitude; I will, or shall [*in righteousness*] behold thy favourable *face*, in the influences of thy love in this life, and thy glory in that life which is to come; and accordingly it will not be different to interpret *Davids beholding*, 1. In this life they behold the favour of God, *with the eyes of their mind*, apprehending the love of God in Jesus Christ to their souls, and being perswaded of

it, according to that of the Apostle, *Rom.*8.38. *I am perswaded that neither life, nor death, nor Angels, &c. shall seperate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* In the *life to come*, they shall behold the face, the *presence*, and *glorious manifestations* of God; not only with the eyes of their minds, but with their *bodily eyes*, *Job* 19.26,27. *In my flesh shall I see God, whom I shall see for my self, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another:* Then we shall see him *face to face*, 1 *Cor.* 13.12. and as he is, 1 *Joh.* 3.12. I have now opened the former part of the text, which I called *Davids resolution*; *I will behold thy face in righteousness, &c.* And you see it comes to thus much.

O Lord, it pleaseth thee in the wisdom of thy providence, to prosper my bloody and cruel enemies; they are full of riches, and children, yet they walk proudly, and dishonour thy name; they have a large proportion of the good things of this life; and they look upon them as their portion; let them do so. *As for me*, I am indeed in a low condition, poor, and afflicted, and *persecuted*; but I will look after righteousness: I will *labour* for the *righteousness of Jesus Christ*, and endeavour to live a holy life and conversation, having respect to all the Commandments, and walking closely with thee: Though I be used cruelly, and unjustly; yet I will walk innocently, and manage a just and righteous cause; and so doing, I will look towards thee, and hope in thee. Let

others

others look after the favour of the world, my business shall be, to contemplate thee, to meditate; to fix the eyes of my soul on thee, that I may have the manifestation of thy love to my soul here; and that I may enjoy thee in glory hereafter. This shall be my aim; this my study: though I do not now see thee, yet if my soul be clothed with the Righteousness of thy Son; if I endeavour to walk closely with thee, I shall one day, either here, or in glory, behold thy face; if I do not see thy face before I die, yet in the resurrection I shall see it. *When I awake, I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.*

I come now to the Explication of the latter part of the text, which I told you in those words: [*I shall be satisfied*] The *Septuagint* reads it, I shall be feasted. 1. The word signifies a *plentiful filling*. The word by which the Greek Interpreters translate it, signifieth such a *filling*, as the beasts are filled with: eating grass, you know, they make themselves very full, feeding meerly by sense, and according to appetite, under no regulation of reason: Thus it is used, *Hosea* 13. 6. *According to their pasture, so were they filled: and their heart was exalted.* To this degree are souls sometimes filled (in this life) with manifestations of grace: Thus are the souls of the Saints filled with Gods manifestations of himself to them in glory: Such sometimes are the shinings of divine light upon the soul, on this side of Heaven, that it knows not how to bear any more: it is filled with a joy unspeakable,

unspeakable, and full of glory. But in the other life, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive, what things God hath prepared for them that love him.* Yet even then the glory of the *Sun of Righteousness* will be above the glory of the *brightest Star*: They shall be glorified with the *same glory*, as Christ and his Father are glorified, as to the kind; not *as to the degree of it*: we can receive but according to our *capacity*. In short, they shall be so filled, as they shall desire no more: The word signifieth *perfect fulness*; and therefore Criticks derive it from a word that signifies *seven*, which in the dialect of Scripture, is the number of *perfection*: *Seven times a day will I praise thee*; that is, *many times*. *Vengeance shall be taken on Cain seven-fold*. She that hath born *seven languisheth*, Prov. 24. 16. The righteous man falleth *seven* times a day: And so in many other texts.

Psal. 119. 164. Gen. 4 15. Pro. 24. 16.

But further yet, the word signifies a *filling it with dainties*, as a man is *filled at a feast*, a man may be *filled with bread*, but at a feast we are usually filled with *pleasant bread* (as *Daniel* calleth it) So then, when *David* saith, he shall be satisfied, he in effect saith, I shall be *filled* seven times; *filled brim full, perfectly filled*, as at a feast: And indeed thus shall the souls of Gods people be *filled*; but *when*, and *how*, are two questions which by the remaining words must be resolved.

בהקיץ *When I awake* (saith the text) or *in awaking*, or *in watching*, or *in being made to awake*, or

or *to watch*. For the form of the words, it admits this variety of interpretation. The LXX. read it, *When thou shalt appear unto me*. The *Vulg. Lat. When thy glory shall appear unto me*. We will first consider the original word in its *latitude* of significancy, and then *weigh* what it here importeth.

The word in the Hebrew comes from a root, which signifies three things: 1. *To make tedious*. 2. *To watch*. 3. *To awake*. The two latter alone can fit this text; and betwixt those two interpretations, I find all valuable interpreters divided. The Hebrew properly is *in watching*, or *in awaking*. We translate it, when *I shall awake* (there's no material difference.) I will begin with the first, which is something different from our English; *I shall be satisfied in watching*; or while I watch for thy likeness. Thus this very word is translated, *Ezek. 7. 6. An end is come, it watcheth for thee*. I confess I am loth to exclude this sense of the words: *I shall be satisfied in watching for thy likeness*. *Watching* is but an empty, hungry action, and gives the soul no satisfaction; but here's the difference betwixt *watching for the world*, and *watching for God*. As to worldly things, *Hope deferred makes the heart sick*: as to God it is not so. *A watching and waiting for God*, brings a proportionable satisfaction: It ought in a great measure to satisfie a gracious soul, in his hours of darkness, if he doth but find God inabling him to watch for *his likeness*.

2. But the word is otherwise translated and properly enough [*in waking, or when I shall awake*] or be *made to awake.*] Thus the word is often translated in Scripture, *Psal.* 3. 6. and in many other texts.

Psal. 3. 6.

1. Some apply this to God, as if it should be *when thou awakest.* Indeed the Hebrew is no more than in *awaking*, or in *being made to awake.* *When thy faithfulness shall awake* (say they) *I shall be satisfied with thy likeness.* Indeed, when God seemeth to us not to take care and regard his people, he is said to sleep (by a figure) for *he neither slumbereth nor sleepeth*) and the holy Psalmist calleth to him as to one *asleep. Awake, why sleepest thou O Lord!* God is said to sleep, when according to humane sense and apprehension, he carrieth himself toward his people like a man that is asleep; and in a conformity of phrase, when he turns his hand, and appears for his people, then he is said to awake: and when God thus awakes, his people use to be satisfied with his appearances for them: But though there be a truth in this, yet I do not think it the sense of the text.

V. Vicars ad locum.

Psa. 44. 23.

2. Others (as I noted before) making the words to be the words of Christ, understand them of his *Resurrection.* Our Saviour knew that when he by death had satisfied *Divine Justice*, by the accursed death, and born the brunt of his Fathers wrath, he should awake the third day, by a glorious Resurrection; and having conquered death, and satisfied justice,

he

he should again behold his Fathers face clear from all clouds and frowns, ascending up on high, and sitting on the *right hand of God*. This is *Hierom*'s notion of the text: but doubtless the text is not to be so restrained.

3. I agree therefore with those, who make these words the words of holy *David*, promising himself satisfaction with the image or likeness of God when he should *awake*.

1. By his *awaking*, I find some understanding, his *recovery and deliverance from that afflicted state in which at present he was*. Indeed the time of affliction, is a time of night, and often in Scripture is expressed under the notion of *darkness*, which gives advantage to this interpretation, which both *Calvin* and *Mollerus* favour, thinking it by others applied to the Resurrection, *argutè magis quàm propriè*, more subtilly than properly. According to them the sense is this; At present it is night with me, and I am as it were *asleep*, and in a bed of trial and affliction; but I know that this shall not be to me a *dead sleep*. Though I am *fallen*, yet *I shall rise again*; though I be *asleep*, I shall *awake again*; and when Gods time cometh, I shall be satisfied with the manifestations of his love, and the evidences of his favour to me.

But (with all due respect to those Interpreters whom this sense pleaseth,) I rather incline to those, who interpret this *awaking* of the *Resurrection*. To make it clear.

1. It is plain, it *is a figurative expression*.

Waking

Waking you know hath a reference to *sleeping*: Now *sleep* in Scripture is taken *literally*; so it signifieth the locking, or binding up of the exteriour senses; and *waking* is the freeing of the senses; in which sense it cannot be taken here, though I meet with some who think that *David* here speaketh as a Prophet, expecting the *visions of the morning*.

2. Or else it is taken *figuratively*; so it is very often used to express *death*. Our friend *Lazarus* sleepeth, *Joh.* 11. 11. The Maid (saith our Saviour) is not dead, but *sleepeth*. And when *Stephen* died, it is said, *he fell asleep*. I find this very word used, to express an *awaking* from the sleep of death, 2 *King.* 4. 31. *The child is not awaked*, meaning that it was dead, *Isa.* 26. 19. *Awake and sing you that dwell in the dust*. But further yet, the *awaking* here spoken of, relates to *David*. Now hearken what the Scripture saith of *Davids sleeping*, *Acts* 13. 36. *After that he had* (*according to the will of God*) *served, he fell asleep*. What's the meaning of that? is it not that *he died*? Now what is the *awaking* related to this *sleep*, but the *Resurrection*? and in this sense I find many eminent Expositors agreed. The Learned *de Muis* hath another interpretation, in which I find none going along with him; *When I awake*, that is (saith he) *when I shall dye*: while the soul is in the body, it sleeps; when it leaves the body, it awakes; *Quum expergefacta fuerit anima mea de corpore, in quo velut, sepulta jacet, & evo-*

laverit

Act. 13. 36.

V. Piscat. Ames. Engl. Annot. Diodate, Ainsworth, ad loc.

De Muis ad locum.

averit anima mea ad imaginem tuam creata. To justifie this his notion, he quoteth *Jer.* 51. 39. where the souls of the wicked are said to *sleep a perpetual sleep*: In opposition to this, he saith, the souls of the Saints when they die, are said to *awake*. Indeed if we consider sleep as it is the *binding up of the exteriour senses*, and an *hinderance* to them in their *operations*, and then reflect upon the soul, *while tied to the body*, how much it is hindered, in the freedom of its communion with God: There is some analogy betwixt the case of a soul in a state of conjunction with the body and *sleep*: And it is true, that in death the *soul* is restored to a greater freedom for communion with God: But I do not think this the sense, nor is this the usage of the *metaphor* (I think) to be justified by parallel Scriptures. One thing I must further observe, as to the form of the Hebrew word. *Grammarians* observe, that the conjugation *Hiphil* (in which the word is found, adds *facio* to the *original* signification of a *verb*, which (if it hath place here) it properly signifies, in *being made to watch*, or being *made to awake*, denoting to us the necessity of a divine influence, both to uphold our souls, in *watching* and *waiting* for God, when we *do not see him*; and also in *restoring life* to our dead bodies in the Resurrection. It is God who giveth *spiritual life*, and who giveeth the aboundings of *spiritual life*, who first *quickeneth* the soul, and who *further quickeneth* it, and keepeth it up in its spiritual

 operations

operations; and it is God who *quickneth the dead*, *Rom.* 4. 17. The words thus opened, afford us two things, as grounds of *David's* satisfaction, in that dark condition in which he was. Though his state was but at present sad, and uncomfortable: though lately he neither had seen God, nor heard from him, only had seen and felt the frowns and thunderings of his providence against him, yet he would be satisfied.

1. If he found God inabling him, in this his sad, perplexed, persecuted state, to wait upon him, and exercise grace in watching for him.

2. In the assurance he had, that though as yet he were unsatisfied, and might possibly fall asleep so in death; yet in the resurrection of the just he should awake from that sleep; then he should have enough of God, and be fully satisfied *with his likeness*. I have only that one term more to open.

תְּמוּנָתֶךָ *With thy likeness.*] The Hebrew word signifies, the imaginary form of a thing, *Isa.* 14. 16. *An Image was before mine eyes.* Sometimes *the real form of a thing presented to the bodily eye*, *Deut.* 4. 16. *You saw no manner of similitude, on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb, out of the midst of the fire*; that is, God did not appear to you in any *real, sensible shape*. Sometimes it signifieth some *real signature* of a thing presented not *to the eye of the body*, but *to the eye of the mind*, to the understanding. So *Numb.* 12. 8. *The similitude of the Lord shall he behold*: That is

I will

I will make an impression of my divine Nature and *Majesty* upon him, by which he shall be able in some measure, to conceive of, and to comprehend me. We cannot see the *divine Essence*; such glory is too great for mortal eyes; we are not able to fix our eyes upon the Sun riding in the Firmament in its full triumph of light, much less upon his Essence, whose brightness is such, that even the Sun in its fullest glory, is darkness to him. God told *Moses*, he could not see his *face* and live; but his *similitude he should behold:* he would make upon his spirit an impression of his *Majesty* and *Goodness*. But let us now inquire more strictly what this *likeness of God* in the text is: The *Septuagint* interpret it; *The glory of God.* I shall be satisfied *with thy glory*; that is a truth, but whether the whole of the truth, I doubt. Some think *the Ark of God is meant*, which the wife of *Phinehas*, called the *glory of Israel.* And that *David* in this his afflicted state, comforted himself with this consideration, that he one day should again see the *Ark* of *God*; the *power* and the *glory of God* in his *Sanctuary.* We read also, that when he fled from *Absolom*, and *Abiathar* brought the Ark after him, he bid him carry it back again, if the *Lord had a pleasure in him, he would bring him back, and he should see it, and his holy habitation.* But I think we shall find that *glorious Symbol* of Gods presence, no where stiled *Gods likeness.*

Others think, that by *Gods likeness* here, *David* understands *Christ*, who is indeed

called

called the *brightness of his Fathers glory*, the *express Image of his person*. And that David here comforts himself (as Job before him) that he *should see his Redeemer with those eyes*. Those who interpret the text as the words of Christ; by *Gods likeness* here understand the *glory* of God, wherewith Christ was *glorified* after his *resurrection from the dead*, and *ascension*. But I take all these senses to be too much forced upon the text.

There are three things which I think may be all comprehended under this term.

1. *There is a likeness of God in us.* Adam was at first created in Gods image or likeness, Gen. 1.26. *Gen.* 1. 26. And in our *Regeneration*, the image of God is said to be renewed in us, Col. 3. 10. *Col.* 3. 10. And we are said to be created after the *image of God, in righteousness and holiness*. Thus we are commanded to *be holy as the Lord is holy*. This is now the image of God within us; the impression of the spirit of Grace upon our hearts, by which we are made partakers of the *Divine Nature*. I take this to be much the sense of the place; Lord, if thou shalt inable me in my dark hours to study, and to perfect holiness, I shall be satisfied, though I want comfort, yet I shall be much satisfied if I be but inabled to watch for a further degree in holiness.

2. Secondly, We may take *likeness*, for *Gods manifestations of himself to us, by his spirit of consolation*. In this life we do not see God as he is; but he sometimes makes gracious manifestations of his love unto his people in the sensible

sensible consolations of his Spirit, reflecting divine Love upon the souls of the Saints, and sealing them up to the day of Redemption. Now, (saith the Psalmist) though I do not see the Lord in this *likeness* of his; though I want the assurances of his love, and comfortable manifestations of his gracious Spirit; yet Lord, it shall stay me, if I find thy grace inabling me, but to wait for these manifestations.

3. Lastly, Gods *likeness* may be taken for *the glorious manifestation of himself* to his Saints in another life; and this I take to come fullest up to *Davids* meaning. O Lord, though while I live here, I walk in the dark, and see no light; while I am beholding thy face in righteousness, and watching for thee; though I may go down to the grave, and sleep my sleep in the dust, not fully satisfied, not seeing what of God I would do: yet this I know, that in the resurrection I shall awake, and then I shall be made amends for all which my soul hath suffered in its dark and sad hours, under the ecclipses of divine light: I shall then be filled with God; I shall see him *as he is, face to face*; and my *vile body* shall be made like to my *Redeemers glorious body*. Thus I have largely opened the words; take the substance of them shortly.

David was at this time in a sad condition, both

1. *In respect of the persecution against him from without*: And

2. *The divine desertion which at this time clouded his inward man.* 3. And

3. And *the temptations which attended him in these straits.*

In this verse he takes up his resolution what he would do; and also shews us what stayed his heart, and gave him something of satisfaction in his perplexity.

That which he resolveth to do, is to *labour for the Righteousness of Christ*, in which to behold the face of God, to live an holy life and conversation, and to manage his cause against his enemies in a just and innocent manner.

That which he fixeth upon as his comfort, is,

1. Gods present inabling him to perfect holiness in his fear, and to wait for the manifestations of divine light.

2. His sure hopes, that if he should fall asleep in death, not satisfied; yet there would be a resurrection from the dead, and in that glorious morning, he should awake, and then he should be filled with the manifestations of God: this is the substance of the words. Now suppose your selves to hear *David* speaking the same thing more copiously.

O Lord, my soul is in a sad and perplexed condition; *without are fightings, within are fears:* mine enemies are many, and proud, and cruel as Lions; they are men of power and estate, whose bellies are filled with hid treasure. I am poor, and empty, hunted like a Partridge upon the Mountains: First *Saul* rose up against me; now mine own Son is in rebellion, and my soul also, O Lord!

walks

walks in the dark, and seeth no light, I cry, but thou hast not heard me; I am at a loss to know what thou determinest to do with me.

If I had all that my proud and potent enemies have, all their treasure, all their substance, all the good things of this life, all their sweet morsels, I could not be satisfied with all those husks, while I want thy favour, and the light of thy countenance. But this shall be my work; this shall be that which I will study, and look after: I have fixed mine eyes upon thy love and favour; let the men of the world look after that; let them look upon their great estates, I will behold thy face, and labour for the light of thy countenance, and that I may obtain it; I trust not in my own righteousness; in the righteousness of my Lord *I will behold thy face*. I will endeavour in thy strength to live an holy and righteous conversation; *perfecting holiness in thy fear*; and in all things endeavouring to live up to thy mind and will discovered to me: and for this cause, which I am (through thy providence) managing against those who have risen up against me, I will manage it righteously, with all integrity and innocency toward them who are so fierce and cruel against me: And in this resolution, *O Lord*, in my affliction, it will be a great stay unto me, if I may but find the continuance of thy strength inabling me to labour after the perfecting of the renovation of thine image in my soul; and to wait for the further shinings

out of the light of thy countenance: if I can but find thee thus appearing to my soul, I shall at present endeavour to be satisfied, knowing that it will not be long before I shall fall asleep in death, and from that sleep I shall awake in the morning of the resurrection, and then I shall be abundantly satisfied with thy likeness, seeing thee face to face, and rejoycing in thy presence for ever more.

The words thus opened, will afford us many Propositions; some I shall but lightly touch upon, hastening to what I intend for the subject of a fuller discourse.

First, From the tacit *Antithesis*, hinted in those words which our translation supplies, necessary to give you the full sense. *But as for me.*

1 Obs. *What will satisfie a man of the world, will not satisfie a child of God.* Different natures require different food. Swine will feed upon Acorns and offal. Dogs will feed upon bones, and excrements. But man feeds upon none of these. A *different genius* and *disposition* requires a different object to give it satisfaction: *Gold and Silver* satisfies a covetous man: *Wine and strong drink* satisfies a drunkard: The Philosopher despiseth and throws away these things to attend to *contemplation*, and the knowledge of the *reasons* and *causes* of things: The child of God is of a *different nature*, of a different disposition and inclination, and complexion from other men: he is made a *partaker* of the *Divine Nature*; he hath a new

name, a *new will*, *new affections*, *new dispositions* given to him. Sinners indeed are of several complexions; give one *wealth* enough, and you satisfie him; give another objects enough for his lust; give him *sensual pleasure* enough, and you satisfie him: give a third *honour* and preferment enough, he asks no more: give the best of them enough of *humane learning and knowledge*, and he will be content; whether he hath any portion in Christ; whether he findeth any *joy and peace of conscience*; whether he seeth any thing of the light of Gods countenance, yea or no. It is said of *Abraham*, that he gave the Sons he had by *Keturah*, *portions*, *and sent them away*; they were not at all concerned for the promise of which *Isaac* was heir. Wicked men are like *Esau*, they will sell their birth-right *for a morsel of bread*. The child of God cannot be thus satisfied, as *Abraham* replyed upon God, asking him, *What he should give him? What canst thou give me so long as I go childless?* So do they say, *Lord, what canst thou give me while I want thy presence? Luther* protested God should not put him off with worldly affluences: he judgeth all fulness emptiness, excepting only the fulness of him *who filleth all in all*: the reason of this is, his *spiritual illumination*, and knowledge to discern things that differ; the *convictions* and *different apprehensions*, which the holy Spirit hath wrought in his soul, which make it morally impossible to him to rest satisfied with less than an infinite God, and a portion in him.

Protestatus sum me sic ab eo nolle satiari. Luther.

Omnis creatura quæ non est Deus meus est egestas. Aug.

Oh! how thin is this number in the world how small is this generation of those who in truth seek the Lords face? where almost is the person to be found, to whom God might not give a portion in this life only, and quietly send him away without any repining at all? who would not fall down, and even worship the Devil, for a *great estate*, for a little momentany pleasure, for some considerable degree of honour, or some other moveables, and transient vanities of this life? how few are they who would look any further than to have such a portion of substance, as they might have plentifully whiles they live, and *divide the rest unto their babes?* Amongst all the complaints and murmurings we hear in the world, how few are they that complain for want of the presence and influence of God? we hear men complain for want of *estates, honours, &c.* but ah! how few for want of grace? how few for want of the sense of divine love? for want of the enjoyments of God? &c.

Secondly, From those words [*I will behold thy face in righteousness*] observe,

2 Obs. *There is no beholding of Gods face but in righteousness: Whether it be in a way of duty, that we behold God; or whether it be in a way of comfort.* We must still behold him in righteousness, *in the righteousness of Christ imputed to us. Daniel* of old prayed to be heard *for the Lords sake:* we are commanded to ask *in the Name of Christ*, believing: Or, whether it be *in the way of comfort.* Christ

is the only glass in which we can behold our Fathers face, and therefore we are bid to *rejoyce in the Lord*, and *joy and peace* is annexed to *beliving*, an act, of which Christ is the object. *In the righteousness also of an holy life. Without peace and holiness, no man shall see God*, (saith the Apostle) not in glory, when this life shall be determined, not *in this life*, by the *reflections of faith*. Not *in duty God heareth not sinners*: he that *lifts up* hands unto God, must lift up *pure hands*, *without doubting*. The very Heathens by the light of nature, could see that pure hands must be reached out to the Altars, if they expected to find the *Gods* upon their duties propitious. *In the righteousness of an innocent and just cause.* It is ill appealing to God in an unrighteous cause, and hopes of countenance and assistance from him in unrighteousness, are but bold presumptions, and tacit reproachings of his spotless purity. Hence learn how few there are who truly behold the Lords face in duty, who truly feel the warming influences of his divine love. Ah! how many cheat themselves with images and dreams? how many rise up from duty, thinking they have seen the face of God, when they have seen nothing but the reflections of their own gifts, or presumptions? how many dream of beholding the face of God in the sensible consolations of his Spirit, who alas have seen nothing but the spirit of delusions, cheating their souls with false confidences and delusions? what do *Papists* talk of beholding Gods face in their own, or their

fellow-creatures righteousnes? what doth any *drunkard, swearer, morally vitious* and *prophane person* talk of beholding the face of God, whiles he lives a lewd and unholy life and conversation! If he *makes many prayers, God will not hear him*; his heart is full of prophaneness, his hands are full of unrighteousness. Let no man dare to appeal to God in an unrighteous matter, to seek counsel of God, or assistance from him in unrighteous causes. The unrighteous soul can never behold the Lords face.

Thirdly, From *Davids* present resolution, considered with respect to the present state of affliction in which he was. Observe,

3 Obs. *It is the duty of Gods people, though Gods face be not towards them, yet in righteousnes to be beholding it.* This was the Churches resolution, *Isa.* 8. 17. *I will wait upon him who hides his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him*, Isa. 50. 10. *Who is amongst you who feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his servant; that walketh in darkness, and seeth no light, let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.* God expecteth that his people should not desert him, because in the wisdom of his providence he is sometimes pleased to hide his face from them. But I shall (I think have occasion) in my following discourse further to inlarge upon this, I therefore pass it over here, and come to what I intend to fix upon as the subject of my discourse.

Doct.

Doct. *It is the great duty of the people of God, although they want visions of peace: yea, though they should fall asleep in death, without such sensible manifestations; yet to stay their souls, and be in some degree satisfied; if they find the Lord inabling them to watch for his likeness; and having a sure confidence, that in the resurrection they shall be abundantly satisfied with it.*

The Proposition is complex, and containeth many within it. There is in it some things implied, others expressed.

Five things are implied.

1. *That a child of God may sometimes walk in darkness, and not satisfied with Gods likeness.*

2. *That it is possible he may fall asleep, and die under a dissatisfaction.*

3. *That during this his dark estate, it is his great duty to watch for the likeness of God.*

4. *That though a child of God shall fall asleep; yet he shall awake in a resurrection.*

5. *That when in that morning he doth awake, he shall be abundantly satisfied with Gods likeness.*

These things are implied. Two things are expressed.

1. *That under their darkness, it should much satisfie them if they find God inabling them to watch for his likeness.*

2. *That if they die in this dissatisfaction, yet it ought to stay their hearts, that in the*

resurrection they shall be abundantly satisfied with the likeness of God.

I shall speak something first to those Propositions which are but implied in the main Proposition. The first was this:

1 Prop. *That Gods children may sometimes walk in darkness, and not be satisfied with his likeness.*

1. *In darkness*, as to their outward man, *Joseph*, *Job*, *David*, almost all the servants of God whom the Scripture hath canonized, had their dark hours of affliction; some of one kind, some of another. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but God delivereth them out of all.*

2. *In darkness, as to their inward man*, there is a *state of sin and ignorance*, which in Scripture is compared to *darkness*: This they cannot *walk in*; they are *translated* out of *darkness* into *marvelous light*; they were indeed (as others) darkened in their minds, but God hath made a glorious light to shine in upon them: But there is a *darkness* of the inward man, with respect to *sensible manifestations*, and *comfortable apprehensions of the love of God*; this they may walk in, *Isa.* 50.10. *They may walk in the dark and see no light*, though they be such as *fear the Lord*, and obey the *voice of his servant*. The Spouse in the *Canticles*, *sought him whom her soul loved*; *she sought him, but she found him not*. *David was troubled when God hid his face from him.*

Isa. 50.10.

Cant. 3. 1.

Psal. 30. 6.

And as it is possible that they may be unsatisfied as to the manifestations of Gods love unto them; so they may be, and often are as

as unsatisfied, *as to the image and likeness of God in them. Perfection* is our rule, *Heb.* 6. 1. but though the Lord hath set it up for our *mark*, 2 *Cor.* 13. 11. yet there is none of us but shooteth short; even Saint *Paul counted not himself to have apprehended; but forgetting what is behind, pressed forward to what is before, unto the price of the high calling.* Now the child of God cannot sit down satisfied, whiles he seeth himself short of the Rule which God hath set him; and this is reason enough for his dissatisfaction in the latter sense. For the former, the reason lies here.

Heb. 6. 1. 2 Cor. 13. 11. Phil. 3. 18.

1. *God upon the Covenant of Grace hath reserved to himself a liberty*, (notwithstanding Christs satisfaction) *to chastise his people*, that they might not go altogether unpunished. Some will not understand how God should *punish* any of his Saints for sin, and think that the asserting of it derogateth from Christs *plenary satisfaction*, which indeed would have something of truth in it, had not God in that Covenant reserved himself this liberty. *If they break my Statutes, and keep not all my Commandments; then will I visit their iniquity with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail. My Covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips.* By vertue of Gods Covenant with Christ for us, their earnest salvation, and the welfare of their souls for ever is secured. Nay more, afflictions, as they are tokens of *divine wrath*, and

Psa. 89. 31, 32, 33, 34.

and legal *demands of satisfaction* to Gods Justice, cannot fall upon Gods people, but he hath reserved to himself the liberty of a Father, in love and kindness to chastise his *people with rods*. The people of God therefore should not think it strange, if they meet with these dark issues of divine providence; nor should any entring into the waies of God promise himself a freedom from afflictions, and trials of this nature. Christ hath secured us eternal salvation, and all necessary means and influences of grace in order to it; but he hath not totally exempted us from the rod of *affliction*: But this is not all. The second Proposition speaketh yet more.

2 Prop. *The Child of God may not only live, but may also die and fall asleep unsatisfied, as to the likeness of God.* This is true both as to the *likeness* of God in them, and the *manifestations of God* unto them.

1. *As to Gods Image in them*; this lies in the perfection of holiness, and is so far true, that it is hard to find a child of God, whoever as to this died satisfied, what Christian on his death-bed ever said, he had *faith enough*, or *love enough*, or *holiness enough*? *David* cryes out, *Although my house be not so with God.* And where is the soul, that departing to eternity, sees not reason to complain that *his heart hath not been so with God as it ought to have been.* The best of men sinneth seven times in a day.

But it is true also as to the apprehensions of *divine love*, not being able when they die to say

say assuredly, *My Beloved is mine, and I am his.* What shall we say to the great example of our Lord and Saviour? It is true, he knew he was the eternal Son of God, that after his resurrection he should be *glorified*, with that *glory* which he had with his Father from all eternity; and in this respect might differ from some of his children, who dying, may want that certainty, and only die with a *good hope through grace*: yet in this dying hour he cryes out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Nor can we well understand how he should for us die *under the curse, and sensible feelings of divine wrath*, unless we grant, that he died under the withdrawings of the sensible manifestations of divine love: and certainly *the Disciple is not above his Master, nor the Servant above his Lord.* Our own experience also proves it: have not we known some persons, of whom while they went in and out with us, could say, *These are the anointed of the Lord*; we saw them walking closely with God, fearing every sin, making conscience of every duty, serving the Lord (so far as we could judge) *in spirit and truth*; and this not in a fit, but constantly; yet when they came to die, their Candles went out in obscurity: We have not seen them in that *triumph of faith*, that *fulness of joy and peace*, which it may be we did expect: Not able to say with *Job*, *In my flesh I shall see God*; nor (with *Paul*) *I am perswaded that neither life, nor death, shall separate me from the love of God in Christ.* Nor

Job 19.26. Rom. 8.38.

is there any thing in ſpiritual reaſon to hinder it. *Senſible manifeſtations* are *none of our neceſſaries*. God hath no where promiſed, that they ſhall not fail the ſoul in death. Mr. *Rutherford* (I remember) propounds this to be obſerved; *Whether uſually, when in the time of their life, the Saints of God have felt many reflexions of divine love, many ſenſible conſolations: God hath not left them to die in the dark: And on the contrary, when any of his children, have in the time of their life, been full of fear and dejections, &c. God hath not uſually in their ſick and dying hours, ſhined upon them with viſions of peace.* It is not to be fixed as a ſtanding Rule, (for the Almighty is neither to be limited, nor tracked in his goings) but it may be worthy of our obſervation.

Now this ſeemeth a very hard diſpenſation: Gods people oft-times know not how to live without *ſenſible manifeſtations* of his love; but they are much more at loſs, how to ſatisfie themſelves to die without it. May we therefore in any degree of humility gueſs at ſome reaſons of ſo ſad a divine diſpenſation.

1. In the firſt place, it is enough (to a modeſt ſoul-inquiſitive in this particular) to ſay, *Even ſo, O Father, becauſe it pleaſeth thee.* God will have us to know, that the wind bloweth both *where it liſteth, and when it liſteth*; and that his Spirit is not leſs free. We ſhall not know the hour when he will viſit his peoples ſouls; nor will he conſtantly come

it

in at the same hour, that he might assert his own liberty to us; this may be one, and indeed it is the great reason to be assigned of this dispensation.

2. *The Lord may have a design by it to make a trial of his servants faith.* It is a good faith that will long maintain a living Saint without sight: but it must be a strong faith which will maintain a Christian in his dying hour without it. This was the faith of *Job*, *Though he kills me, yet I will trust in him.* This is a faith which holds out to the end, and shall have the Crown of life, which God hath promised. It is the last act of faith to serve a departing soul. Love goes with the soul into another world; Faith parts with it at the gates of death; the vision of faith is then changed for the beatifical vision: *What a man seeth, how doth he hope for?* That faith that seeth Christ through a glass darkly, hath its eyes in death quite out: The soul comes with open face to behold the glory of God. It argues a great spirit in a souldier, to fight to his last breath: And it speaks a couragious strong faith, for a Christian to die believing: dying hope is a good hope; therefore it is given as the character of a righteous man, that *he hath hope in death.* And of the Hypocrite it is said, *Where is the hope of an Hypocrite, when God takes away his soul? Job* saith, that *his hope shall be like the giving up of the Ghost.* Look, as dying men fetch their breath *shorter* and *shorter*, till at last it quite fails them: so are the presumptuous hopes

of

of hypocrites; the nearer they come to death, the shorter they fetch the breath of their hopes, till at last they quite fail them, and they die either stupid, or despairing. God makes a great trial of his Saints faith, when he calls them to die in the strength of it.

NB.

3. *God may have a design in it to honour his Word.* If we wholly lived upon sight, the Word of God would not be so precious to us; the Promises would not be so dear to us. (Though I confess it is a very suspicious comfort, which the Word brings not into our souls) but yet consolatory dispensations are the more special and extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit, in a more than ordinary improvement of the Word. Gods Word appeareth, and is made very precious to the soul, when it hangs its whole weight upon it, being not at all advantaged from sensible reflexions. *I had perished* (saith *David*) *in my affliction, if thy Word had not been my delight.* What an honour there did *holy David* put upon the Word of God, acknowledging, that the whole weight of his perishing soul hung upon it, and it sustained him. Indeed there is a secret powerful influence of the Holy Ghost, teaching and inabling the soul to lay hold upon, and to apply this Word. But in *faith of adherence*, though the Spirit be the great Author and Finisher of it, teaching and inabling the soul to lay hold upon, and to apply the Promise; yet it is by a more secret and insensible act, and the Word appeareth most in maintaining that;

Psal. 119. 92.

that. Oh! saith the soul, had it not been for such a Word, such a Promise; such a good word of God is a *faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation.* In the reflex act of Faith, which giveth the soul a plerophorous evidence, or a full perswasion of its evidence in God, the work of the Spirit appeareth more extraordinary and glorious; the vertue of the Word doth not so much shew it self. Now the Lord will sometimes honour his Word in the sight of his children, letting them see that it is enough to support, bear up, and to uphold a soul, though it should never see the face of God till it come in Heaven, yet the Word is enough securely to carry it thither.

4. *God in such a dispensation may have a design to teach his people, that salvation doth not depend upon sensible consolatory manifestations.* Not upon the sweet application of the Promises to the soul (an act wherein we have no share, it being the Lords work alone, and marvelous in our eyes) but upon the strong and steddy application of our souls to the Promise. This latter is *justifying faith*; the other is *the faith of one already actually justified.* We are too prone to lay too much upon sensible comforts. Some there are who will acknowledge no other notion of faith, but a *full perswasion of the love of God*, and so indeed confound *faith* and *sight*, which the Apostle seemed so warily to distinguish, when he told us, *We live by faith*, and not by *sight*. And again, that *hope which is seen, is*

no

no hope; and indeed, cut the throat of many a poor Christians comfort, who, it may be, all his life, cannot come to such a sensible evidence. Indeed the most judicious Christians are prone to lay too much stress upon these consolatory manifestations, and to think all nothing if they want them. Now this is a great error which the Lord may aim at the correction of in his people by such dispensations, letting the soul see there is vertue enough in his Word to bear it up through the deepest waters of affliction, without the bladders of sensible manifestations. Enough in that, and the souls application of it self to that, though until it come in Heaven, it never sees the face of God. It is believing that carries the soul to Heaven, *i. e.* an hungring and relying upon Christ, and his righteousness alone; not that *joy* and *peace* which is the consequent of believing, and that too inconstistent and uncertain. And indeed I do not know any one truth, that needs more rooting and confirmation in a gracious heart. The life of sense is the life of the Saint triumphant. The life of faith is the life of the militant Christian. Though God sometimes condescends in such manifestations to the infirmities and desires of his people, and is pleased to give them a glimpse of glory, as the earnest penny of a future greater reward, which he intendeth them: yet these must not be lookt upon as the necessaries of a Christian; but what God gives us *ex abundanti* a pledge of future glory. Sometimes God give

gives his children to go to Heaven in the sight of Heaven: As *Stephen* went to it, seeing the *Heavens opened, and Christ Jesus standing at the right hand of God*, pleading for him, and ready to receive him into the glorious mansions provided for him: But as this is a note of singular and extraordinary favour, which God is not bound to any particular soul by promise for: so God will sometimes single out a child of his unto death, that shall go to Heaven without this seal, that living Christians may not run away with an erroneous apprehension, that these influences are necessary to salvation; and upon the death of such a child of God the Lord proclaims. See here (*my friends!*) *you of little of faith, here's a child of mine, coming alone to me without the staff of sense; trusting me upon the credit of my bare word: Here's one that hath not seen, and yet hath believed; that hath dared to take my word for Heaven. Now be not faithless, but believing.*

5. Lastly, I do not know but God may sometimes do it *in Justice*: when one who hath been made partaker of Gods distinguishing love, hath apostatized in his profession, or run into some degrees of looseness of life, by which Gods Name hath been dishonoured, the Lord may thus far chastize his Apostacy. I told you before, that the Covenant runs with *a notwithstanding sin*, as to eternal salvation; the unfaithfulness of man cannot make God unfaithful; he *cannot alter the thing gone out of his lips*: But the comforts of Gods people Psal. 89. 33.

may fail, and they may (for ought I know) dy, although not desperatingly, yet doubting with an aking heart, and with broken bones. Divines question whether holy *David* (though stiled the man after Gods own heart) ever after his fall into those two great sins of *murther* and *adultery*, recovered the fulness of his comfort again. It is plain, by all his penitential Psalms, that he lost them, and especially by that petition, *Psal.* 51. 12. *Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.* Though the Scripture plainly evidenceth that he died *strong in the faith*; yet it speaketh nothing of *sensible consolations*. You have his last words, 2 *Sam.* 23. 1. *These be the last words of David.* You will find these words to be a part of his dying speech. *Although my house be not so with God*, that is, not so *spotless* as the morning, when the Sun ariseth, when the Sun ariseth without clouds; *yet he hath made with me an everlasting Covenant, well ordered, and sure in all things: for this is my desire and salvation, although he make it not to grow.* The words speak much of *Davids* adherence, and strong fiducial application of his soul to the *Covenant*, but little of a fulness of joy and peace. I think we may determine thus much, that if *David* did ever recover his fulness of peace, the Scripture hath not recorded it; that we might learn to serve the Lord with fear, and to walk before him with trembling; yet neither is this the Lords constant dealing. *Peter* denyed his *Master*, *cursed* and *sware*; yet afterward Christ shewed

shewed him *special favour*. After Christs resurrection the Angel bid, *Go tell his Disciples, and Peter*, that *he went before them into Galilee*, *Mark* 16. 7. Divines think those words [*and Peter*] are put in to assure *Peter* under some dejection by reason of his fall, of the Lords favour to him, notwithstanding his backsliding. *Peter* was designed for a great service of his Master in the work of the Gospel, to which a sad and dejected spirit would not a little have discomposed him. Thus much may serve for the second Proposition, which I told you was no more than implied. The third follows.

While a child of God doth not behold the face of God, it is his duty to watch for it. Two terms must here be opened. 3 Prop.

1. That of *beholding Gods face.*
2. That of *watching for it.*

There is a twofold beholding of Gods face.

1. *By faith in righteousness.*
2. *By sense in assurance.*

1. There is a *beholding of God by faith.* Faith in Scripture is sometimes expressed to us by *the action of the mouth. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood* (saith our Saviour) *dwelleth in me, and I in him.* Sometimes by *the action of the hand*; by *receiving, and laying hold upon Christ, and the Covenant. To as many as received him, he gave power to be called the Sons of God.* Sometimes by *the action of the feet*; Coming, so often in Scripture; *Come unto me you that are weary and heavy laden:* Joh. 6. 54. Joh. 1. 12. Heb. 6. 18. Prov. 3. 18. John 6. 35. Mat. 11. 28.

Isa. 50. 10. and *he that cometh unto me, I will in no wise*
Cant. 3. 8. *cast away*: And so in many other texts:
Psal. 37. 7. Sometimes by *the actions of the whole man*;
Zech. 12. 10. thus it is called a *staying*, a *leaning*, a *trusting*, *resting*, *committing our selves unto God*. So also sometimes it is expressed by the action of the eye. Now by this vision of faith it is impossible that one should be a believer and not *see God*. Indeed the sight of this eye may possibly at sometimes be clearer and quicker than at other times; it may sometimes be more full and bright, at another time more dim, and weak, and imperfect: but faith is this very visive faculty, if I may so speak, and a child of God must thus behold the face of God, though not actually, or not gradually to such a degree at one time, as at another, yet habitually it must alwaies have a power thus to behold God, though sometimes it exerts it more feebly, sometimes more strongly; yet more or less a gracious soul (in this sense) at all times doth behold the Lords face, even in its darkest hours, *Isa.* 8. 17. *I will wait upon him who hides his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.*

2. There is another Vision, which I called *the Vision of Sense*, which is the beholding of the Lords face, in *the reflections of divine love*; for this *David* prayes, *Psal.* 4. 6. *Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us*; and often in the *Psalms*, *Make thy face to shine upon us*. Now in this sense (as I have shewed you) it is very possible that Gods dearest children may not see his face; and this is

that

that *beholding the Lords face*, of which the Propoſition is to be underſtood, during the eclipſe, or want whereof, it is the duty of the child of God *to watch for his likeneſs*. So I told you here the word בהקיץ may be, and is ſometimes in Scripture tranſlated ſo. By the *Likeneſs of God*, I underſtand (as before) either *his likeneſs in us*, (which the Apoſtle calleth the Image of God, in *knowledge*, *righteouſneſs* and *holineß*) or Gods *ſenſible manifeſtations* of himſelf; when a believer wants theſe; when he cannot *behold the face of God*, in ſuch ſweet apprehenſions, it is even then his duty to *watch for Gods likeneß*; for Gods *likeneß* in either ſenſe, as it ſignifieth both holineſs and comfort. I ſay, to *watch for it*; it is a metaphorical expreſſion, and ſignifies 1. *Negation of ſleep.* 2. *Induſtrious diligence to keep our ſelves in a capacity fit to receive what we deſire.* 3. *Patient expectation.*

1. He who watcheth *ſleepeth not*. It is an ordinary metaphor in holy Writ, to expreſs *death*, and *ſinning*, by *ſleep*; the latter only is here meant. So (ſaith the Spouſe) *I ſleep, but my heart waketh*, 2 Theſ. 5. 6. *Let us not* 2 Theſ. 5. 6. *ſleep, as do others. Awake thou that ſleepeſt, and ſtand up from the dead.* And look as it is in ſleeping; *None lives*, and *ſleepeth not*. Eph. 5. 14. Some *ſet themſelves to ſleep*; ſome *ſtrive againſt it ſometimes*, yet *fall aſleep* through heavineſs: Some by *ſome more ſet in means* are made to ſleep. So it is as to ſin; ſome are greater ſinners, ſleep more than others; but

none liveth and ſinneth not againſt God; but one man ſinneth *wilfully and preſumptuouſly*, ſets himſelf to ſin, his life is nothing elſe; another ſets himſelf againſt ſin, yet through that heavineſs which is in him from *original corruption*, the remainder of the *body of death*, Rom. 7 23, 24. he often *falleth aſleep*; and ſometimes through the *methods*, *devices* and *depths* of Satan, and the allurements of the world, as from ſo many ſleepy potions given him, he falls into a ſleep. Now he who watcheth in a *ſpiritual ſenſe*, doth not *ſleep* in the firſt ſenſe, according to that of the *Apoſtle*, *He that is born of God ſinneth not*. The child of God in his dark hours, ought to take heed of wilful ſinning againſt God; though he walks in the dark of a divine deſertion, yet he ought to take heed of a ſinful converſation; he muſt be able Pſal. 119. 83. to ſay with *David*, *I am become like a bottle in the ſmoak, yet do I not forget thy Statutes*: And with the Church, *All this is come upon us, yet have we not forgotten thee, neither have we dealt falſly in thy Covenant: Our heart is* Pſa. 44. 17, 18, 19. *not turned back, neither have our ſteps declined from thy way, though thou haſt ſore broken us in the place of dragons, and covered us with the ſhadow of death.* This is the firſt thing implied in this metaphorical expreſſion: But this is not all.

2. There is a difference between *watching*, and bare *waking*: *Watching* is a *voluntary induſtrious action*, whereby a man *ſtriveth to keep himſelf awake at ſuch a time when he is inclined to ſleep*, for the *heeding* of ſomething in a more

more *special manner.* To *watch* therefore in a spiritual sense, implieth, to *labour, strive, and use all means and diligence, to obtain the likeness of God*; not only to *eschew evil*, but to *do good.* Thus *watching for Gods likeness*, includeth *praying hearing*, performance of all *holy duties*, leading an *holy life* and *conversation*; that whuchthe Psalmist calleth, *ordering our conversation aright*, that *we may see the salvation of God*: And this is, as the duty of a child of God at all times; so more especially, in his hours of desertion and darkness: you shall find this eminently exemplified in the Spouse, *Cant.* 3. 1, *&c. By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth, I sought him, but I found him not. I will rise now, and go about the City, in the streets, and in the broad ways, I will seek him whom my soul loveth, &c.* v. 3, *The watchmen that goe about the City found me, to whom I said, Saw ye him whom my soul loveth?* This is a second thing. A child of God under a desertion, is not to sit still, and mourn, and bewail it self; but to be *up* and *doing*, watching unto prayer, to all *religious duties*, to all parts of an holy and religious life; to be at such a time especially, much in close and diligent communion with God, for the recovery of its lost peace and comfort.

Cant. 3. 1, 2, 3

1 Pet. 4 7.

3. Lastly, *The watchman is to look out for the morning, and with patience to wait for it.* This is also the duty of him that walketh in *spiritual darkness* (I mean, the want of sensible consolations) *My soul waiteth for the*

Lord, more than they that watch for the morn-
Psa. 130. 6. *ing*; (saith holy *David*) *Psal.* 130. 6. *I say, more than they that watch for the morning.*
Isa. 8. 17. Thus the Church, *Isa.* 8. 17. *I will wait upon him that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will look for him.* Thus *Habakkuk*,
Hab. 2. 1, 2, 3. for the answer of his prayer on the behalf of the Church; *I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon my Tower; I will watch to see what he will say unto me. The vision is yet for an appointed time, but in the end it shall speak, it shall not lye; though it tarry, wait for it.* Thus now I have opened this duty to you, and shewn you what this is to *watch for God*; to *watch for his likeness*. Now that this is a Christians duty in his hours of darkness, appears,

1. *From the Precept of God, obliging you to it*, The will of God revealed, is that which makes a *Christians duty*: God hath bidden us *watch* and *wait*, and order our conversation aright.

2. *From the Examples of the Children of God*, recorded in Scripture, wherein they have done well; they are lights unto us, and oblige us to do likewise. Look upon *Job*, *David*, the *Church of God*; all those of whom you have record in holy Writ, see them in their dark hours, observe their practice, you shall find them all fearful of sinning, resolved against it, full of *prayer*, and other religious duties, and striving and resolving to order their conversation aright.

3. This will appear to be your duty, if

you

you consider the several parts of it as means prescribed by God in order to so good and blessed an end. The promise of *seeing God* is made to such as *order their conversation aright*, Psal. 50. Psal. 27. 14. *Wait upon the Lord, and he shall strengthen your heart. They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength, like the Eagle*, Isa. 40. 31. It is made to such as *ask*, and *seek*, and *knock*. *Ask, and you shall have; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you.* Psa. 50 23. Psa. 17.14. Isa 40.31.

4. Lastly, *Whoso considereth God in that freedom which belongs unto him, as to the manifestations of himself to his peoples souls*; or whoso considereth his own *distance* from, and *subjection unto God*; and how little he deserveth of any such *dispensation from him*, will confess that it is not equal, that we should *forsake God*, or abate in our *zeal* for, and *duty to God*, because he *forsaketh us*; and withdraw our duty from God, because he *withdraweth the light of his countenance from us*. God is a free agent, and as the wind *bloweth where it listeth*, so his Spirit moveth; and as it is free in all its motions and influences, so it is most free as to *consolatory manifestations*, being not of the *necessaries* to our *eternal salvation*, but such influences as God, without breach of Covenant, may in whole, or in part, for what time, and in what degree he pleaseth to with-hold from those most in covenant with him. To which might be added, that whatsoever the Lord hath, is the product of infinite *Justice*, *Wisdom* and *Goodness*. doth

nesse. God in it is just, and doth no more than he may do; he is *infinitely wise*, and whatsoever he doth is for *wise and righteous ends*; and he is *infinitely good*, and would not do it, were it not for his peoples good. Besides this, this watching against sin, unto prayer, and to other duties of an holy life, are the moral and perpetual duties of Christians, from which nothing of Gods dealing with us can exempt us: but I shall add no more to my discourse upon the third thing implied in the Doctrine. The fourth follows, which is founded upon the phrase, according to our translation of it [*When I awake*] that is (as I formerly opened it) when *I shall awake* in the resurrection, when I shall awake from the *sleep of death*; where is implied,

4 Prop. *Though the Children of God shall in death fall asleep, yet they shall awake in a resurrection.* Death in Scripture is ordinarily expressed under the notion of *sleep*. *David slept with his Fathers*; so did *Solomon*, *Jeroboam*, *Rehoboam*. In the New Testament, the Maid *sleepeth*, saith our Saviour: and again, *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth*. Great is the Analogy betwixt death and sleep, if I had time, or that were the business of my present discourse to shew you. Death is a *sleep* common to the children of God, as well as others. The Apostle to the *Hebrews* saith, *It is appointed for all men once to die, and after to come to Judgement. Your Fathers, where are they? And do the Prophets live for ever?* Zech. 1. 5. *Who is he that lives, and shall not see death?* For (saith the wise man)

1 King. 2. 10, 11, 43. Mat. 9. 24. Joh. 11. 11. Heb. 9. 27. Zech. 1. 5. Psal. 89. 48.

man) in *Eccles.* 7. 2. *Death is the end of all, and the living shall lay it to heart. The wise man dieth as the fool*, Eccles. 2. 16. This ceasing of *godly men*, and *failing of the faithful*, put *David* to his *Help Lord*, Psal. 12. 1. and made the Prophet of old *complain*, that *no man would consider it*. The Apostle asserts it, and also gives the reason of it, *Rom.* 8. 10. And *if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin.* I take the words to have an *Analogy* in them, and the sense to be, *The body shall die because of sin.* Eccles. 7. 2.

But although the great curse so far falls upon the best of men, who are made alive by the *second Adam*, although the decree of Heaven touching them as well as others, and their house of clay be such as must be *dissolved* as well as others, and they must undergo the common fate of flesh and blood, and having been wearied with the labours of this life, it is but reasonable they should a while rest in their beds in the grave; yet they shall not be like those mentioned by the Prophet, who shall *sleep a perpetual sleep*. Though they sleep, they shall *awake*; though *they fall*, they shall *arise*, therefore their enemy death hath no cause to triumph over them. *Our friend Lazarus sleeps*; but I go (saith Christ) that *I may awake him out of sleep*. Thy Brother *shall rise again*, saith Christ to *Martha*; she assents to it; *I know that he shall rise again at the resurrection in the last day*. As death is called a sleep; so the resurrection from the dead, is called an *awaking out of sleep*. Thus in Jer. 51. 39. Joh. 11. 11, 23, 24.

in *Daniel*, *Many that sleep in the dust shall awake*, Dan. 12. 2. *Awake and sing you that dwell in the dust* (saith the Apostle.) That there shall be a *resurrection*, is an article of our faith, and so momentous aone, that it is one of the pillars upon which Religion stands. *If the dead rise not, then is not Christ risen* (saith the Apostle) *and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching in vain, and your faith is*
1 Cor. 15. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17. *also in vain; and the Apostles are found false witnesses for God, because they have testified of God that he hath raised up Christ, whom he raised not up if the dead rise not. And if Christ be not risen, your faith is yet in vain, you are dead in your sins, and they also who are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.* By this, and a far greater plenty of arguments, the Apostle confirms a necessity of a *Resurrection*. It is true, the Resurrection belongs to wicked men, as well as to the *children of God*; they also *shall rise*, they shall come to judgement; but the resurrection shall be so much to the *damage* and *detriment of sinners*, that we shall find (in Scripture) the *Resurrection* mentioned, as if it were the special priviledge of
Phil. 3. 11. Gods people, *Phil.* 3. 11. *If by any means I might attain to the resurrection of the dead*: they are called *the children of the resurrection*,
Luk. 20. 36. Luke 20. 36. But I shall forbear any further discourse upon this Proposition, remembring that I am in a Congregation of Christians, of whose Religion this is one of the fundamen-
Heb. 6. 2. tal Doctrines, *Heb.* 6. 2. I come to the last of these Propositions I told you were implied, *viz.*

That

That in the Resurrection, Believers shall be satisfied with the Lords likeneſs. By the likeneſs of God here, I mean the *beatifical vision*; the manifeſtation of God to his Saints in Heaven, when they ſhall be ſatisfied with ſeeing him as he is, and beholding him *face* to *face*. Prop. 5.

I obſerved before to you, the emphaſis of the term *ſatisfied*; I told you that it impli∣eth two things.

1. *They ſhall be filled.*

2. *They ſhall be ſo filled, that themſelves ſhall judge they have enough.* A man may be filled, and not ſatisfied: the glutton may be filled with meat; the *drunkard* with wine and ſtrong drink, yet neither of them ſatisfied: the voluptuous man may have a fulneſs of pleaſure, and yet not be ſatisfied: the cove∣tous man is filled with ſilver, yet not ſatiſ∣fied. The wiſe man ſaith, *There are four things that ſay not, it is enough*; and there are *three things that are never ſatisfied.* Many more might be added; the *ambitious man* is never ſatisfied with honour; the *covetous man* is never ſatisfied with *gold and ſilver*; the *vo∣luptuous man* is never ſatisfied with pleaſure, and the *objects of his luſt.* No ſinner ſaies, he hath of *ſin* enough; No Saint ſaith, he hath enough of grace; but eſpecially as to all creature comforts, this is a vanity which or∣dinarily doth attend them; they *fill*, but do not *ſatisfie*; but are like the graſs upon the houſe top, which is got with a great deal of danger and difficulty; and with which

the

the mower filleth not his arm; nor he that gathereth sheaves his bosom.

The child of God, while he lives here, is ordinarily not satisfied with grace; he knows in part, and he prophecieth in part; he is not holy enough; he cannot so perfect holiness as he desireth; nor (ordinarily) hath he those clear and constant incomes of divine love, and visions of peace, as he wisheth for: But in the Resurrection he shall be filled; he shall be satisfied.

1. He shall be *plenteously filled.*

2. He shall be *perfectly filled.*

1. He shall be *plenteously filled:* Here we are fed with morsels, as we are able to digest; and accordingly as our wise Father seeth best for us, as the *Israelites* were fed with *Manna*; when we shall come in the heavenly *Canaan*, we shall be fed with *milk* and *hony*, and with a flow of it.

2. Secondly, He shall be *perfectly filled.* When our *corruptible* shall have put on *incorruption*, and our *mortal* shall have put on *immortality*, we shall yet be but finite Beings, and shall not be capacious enough to receive the fulness of divine light and glory. The *Schoolmen*, though they agree the immediate passage of the soul to God, when it departeth from the body, yet will not allow it to be perfectly blessed before the *Resurrection*, because they say, there will remain in the soul in its state of separation, a desire to a second union; and while one desire of the soul remaineth unsatisfied, there cannot be a perfection

fection of blessedness; but in that day *that which is in part shall be done away*, that which is perfect being come.

1. The *whole man shall then be satisfied* with the likeness of God. Here the soul sometimes beholdeth God by *spiritual contemplation*, by the *vision of faith*, by *spiritual reflection*, (when God is pleased so far to indulge his child) but here the eye of the body sees nothing of him, in the resurrection we shall see him *with these eyes in our flesh*, saith *Job*. After the dissolution of our bodies, the soul indeed shall with open face behold the glory of God, but our bodies shall be rotting and putrifying in the graves; but in the resurrection, the whole man, both soul and body, shall see God, and be happy in the enjoyment of him to all eternity. In our flesh we shall see him.

2. Secondly, The *degrees of satisfaction we shall have there, are infinitely above what the souls of Gods people enjoy here:* Here we see, but it is as *in a glass darkly*; there we shall see *face to face*: here if at any time God uncovereth his comfortable face to us, yet we can but see him according to our present capacity; but in that day the capacity of the soul will be inlarged, and the soul to its utmost inlarged capacity, shall be filled with the enjoyment of God: Here we see him *by the eye of faith*, sitting upon his *Throne of Grace*, and that sight is full of glory; there we shall see him by the eye of sense upon his Throne of Glory; that sight will be infinitely more

glorious

glorious and beatifical. Here the child of God sometimes seeth God; and though nothing be wanting, *ex parte objecti*, to make him perfectly happy in that vision, God being an unchangeable fulness; yet much is wanting *ex parte subjecti*, our capacities not being able to receive in much of so glorious a light; there is a deficiency in our sight, and such a vastness of glory in the object, that we can but comprehend a little of it. In short, the soul in that day shall be so filled with the likeness of God, that it will be impossible for it to receive any further additions. Yet to obviate the mistakes of some, who know not what they say. As in this life, the measure of the *fulness of the stature of Christ*, is but our mark, not the attainment of any soul; none so pure, so holy, so righteous as Christ: so in that life which is to come, none shall be so *glorious* as Christ. The children of God shall, like *Joseph*, ride in the *second Chariot*; but Christ (who is the *express Image of his Fathers person*) shall be greater in this *Throne of Glory*, than any of Gods people can be; he is of his *Fathers Essence*; the *brightness of his Glory*; the *Word*, his Fathers *express Image*, who so asserts an equality of the Saint, either in grace or glory, to the only begotten Son of God, cannot avoid a double blasphemy. *The exalting a finite Being to the dignity of an infinite Subsistence*; or *the degrading the Creatour, and equalizing him with a creature.* But this is a digression. Certain it is, that the children of God

God in the resurrection shall be filled with the likeness of God, though they shall not have so much of it as the only begotten Son of God. The proof of this is evident from those many phrases in Scripture: We shall see him *as he is, face to face; we shall be like him*; in which I have before instanced.

I have now shortly opened those five Propositions, which I told you were implied in the Proposition; I come now to what is expressed. Here are two grounds of some satisfaction, from *Davids example*, (according to the various sense of the word בהקיץ) for a child of God living under such a dark dispensation; yea if God should call them to die under it.

1. *They should be satisfied in watching for Gods likeness.*

2. This should satisfie them, *that they shall in the resurrection awake*, and then they shall be satisfied with the likeness of God. Let me shortly discourse the reasonableness of both these. First, I say, *Though a Christian should in his life time walk without the sense of divine love; yet he ought to be satisfied in case he findeth God inabling him to resist sin, and to hope in him, and by faith and patience to wait for him, and to order his conversation aright before him; or in short, to watch for him, when he or she doth not see him: Yea if God should call him to die without those sensible comforts which others have, and he possibly thirsteth after.*

I must first open to you how, and how far

far forth he ought to be satisfied, and then give you some reasons for it.

Methinks I hear a child of God thus replying upon me, *Ah Sir, is this possible, that a Christian should be satisfied without the sense of Gods love? a child that tenderly loves his Parent, satisfied under his frown? a wife under jealousies of her husbands love? Are these things possible? Can a soul be satisfied so long as it is crying out, where is my God become? Can a soul awakened to a sense of eternity be satisfied, to leave the earth, and go it knows not whither? This is an hard chapter, an hard saying, who can bear it?*

1. I answer, when I say a Christian should be *satisfied*, my meaning is, not that he should be so contented with such a *dispensation*, as not to *desire an alteration of it*. This is indeed plainly impossible, that a Christian awakened to consider what the love of God to the soul is worth, should live without desires of the manifestations of it to him; they may be thus satisfied, that never felt any thing of Gods wrath, nor were ever warmed with any beams of his special favour; but he that hath ever lived under any feeling of the wrath of God; or that hath ever been perswaded of the love of God, or felt any thing of the warm influences of it, can never be in this sense satisfied; he must pant, and breath, and thirst after Gods manifestations of himself to his soul, and use all possible means for the obtaining of it.

2. But as there is a *Satisfaction* of *complacence*

placence and *delight*, excluſive of any motions, any indeavours, any deſires for an alteration: ſo there is a *Satisfaction* of *content*, in oppoſition to *murmuring*, *repining*, *diſtruſt* and *unbelief*; and in this ſenſe he ought to be ſatisfied, that is,

1. Not to *murmure and repine againſt God*, as not juſt, or wiſe, or good.

2. Not to *diſtruſt God*; not to give over waiting upon him, crying to him, doing his duty, not to deſpond and caſt away his hope in God as to his *eternal ſalvation*, for want of theſe ſenſible manifeſtations, he ought to be ſo far *ſatisfied*, as to be thankful for ſuch influences of grace as he hath, and *with a meek and quiet ſpirit*, to commit himſelf to the good will and pleaſure of God; to *truſt in the Name of the Lord, and to ſtay upon his God*; to continue *waiting upon God, and praying, and ordering his converſation* ſo aright, that he may *ſee the Lords ſalvation*. Thus far ſatisfied a Chriſtian under theſe circumſtances ought to be.

1. Firſt, Becauſe *he hath what may reaſonably give him ſatisfaction, notwithſtanding his want of ſuch more ſenſible and comfortable reflections.* If you ask me what that is, I anſwer, that which the Apoſtle calleth *A ſure word of promiſe*; a word which ſhall not paſs away, though *Heaven and Earth paſs away*. Gods word of promiſe is ſecurity enough for our ſalvation, without the broad-ſeal of aſſurance: This is ſure *to all the ſeed*, Rom. 4. 16. Hence the *Apoſtle* calleth *Hope*, an *anchor of* Rom. 4. 16.

Heb. 6. 19. *the soul, sure and stedfast.* The certainty of the anchor depends upon the ground where it is cast. The certainty of hope depends upon the *infallibility of the Word.* Now the promise is not made to them that see by the *vision of sense*, but to them that *believe*; to them who *behold God* by the stedfast eye of faith. To him that *believeth*, Joh. 3. 18, 36. *He that believeth on the Son, hath everlasting life.* And again, *He is not condemned*: *And to him that ordereth his conversation aright, I will shew the salvation of God*: And often, to him that *waiteth for God.* What are we, that the bare word of the Lord should not satisfie us? It is a quaint notion I have somewhere met with, that God the Father had nothing but Christs word in security for all the souls, whom he took up into Heaven from *Adam*, until Christ had died. No price was paid for them; only Christ had given his word to his Father, that in the fulness of time he would come, and would die for them; upon this security he took them all into Heaven. Hath the word of Christ been taken for the salvation of so many thousand souls (Christian!) and dost thou think it hard to take it for the salvation of thy single soul? Ah! will a Christian say, God forbid I should not take his word; but I do not know that word was made to me? nor that I have any share in it? I answer, thou knowest it is made to them that *believe*; to them *that order their conversation aright*; to them that *love God*; to them that *wait on him*;

John 3. 18, 36.

Psa. 50. 23.

him; that *thirſt after him.* Canſt not thou ſay thou *believeſt?* or if that be not ſo clear to thee, canſt thou not ſay, thou *loveſt God*, that that thou *thirſteſt after him*, that thou art afraid *to ſin againſt him?* I muſt confeſs, if thou beeſt able to ſatisfie thy ſelf in none of theſe, thy caſe is hard: but if thou canſt ſee any thing of theſe, though thou doſt want ſuch a ſatisfaction from ſenſible reflections as thou deſireſt, yet thou haſt a *ſure word of promiſe*, which can never fail thee; and therefore, though thou mayeſt breath, and thirſt after the ſenſible conſolations of God; yet if God in his wiſdom thinks fit to deny thee them, thou oughteſt to be ſo far ſatisfied, as to be thankful, not to *repine*, not to *murmure*, but meekly to commit thy ſelf to God, and quietly to wait upon him, even whiles he hides his face from thy ſad ſoul. This is the firſt reaſon.

2. Again, They ought to be ſatisfied, *becauſe it is the will of God.* It is Gods will *they ſhould want theſe comfortable reflections*; and it is Gods will, that *under the want of them*, they ſhould not repine, but *truſt in the Name of the Lord*, and *ſtay themſelves upon their God*, Iſa. 50. 10. that they ſhould *wait upon him that hideth his face from the houſe of Jacob*, and *look for him*, Iſa. 8. 17. Such is the *wiſdom*, *juſtice* and *goodneſs* of God in all his diſpenſations, (of which we ought to be aſſured) that it ſhould ſtop every mouth, and make all *fleſh ſilent before him.* The conſideration of the *will of God*, hath continually

Iſa. 50. 10.
Iſa. 8. 17.
Lev. 10. 3.

Pſal. 39. 3. ſatisfied the people of God, under all his ſeverer diſpenſations towards them. This ſilenced *Aaron*, when he had loſt his two eldeſt Sons, in the entry of their ſacerdotical office, though they were ſadly cut off in their
1 Sam. 3. iniquity. This made *David* hold his peace;
18. he conſidered that it was the Lords doing, to try his patience. This ſilenced old *Eli*, under that dreadful denunciation againſt his whole
2 King. 20. family; *It is the Lord* (ſaith he) *let him do*
19. *what ſeemeth to him good.* This ſilenced *Hezekiah*, when he heard that his poſterity ſhould be rooted out, and carried captives
Act. 21. 14. into *Babylon.* This ſatisfied the Diſciples, when they heard they ſhould ſee their beloved *Pauls* face no more, they ſaid, *The will of the Lord be done.* And this ought to ſilence every ſoul that hath learned to reſign up his will to the divine will, and to ſay, *Thy will be done in Earth as it is in Heaven.*

3. Thirdly, If we conſider it wiſely, we ſhall find all imaginable reaſon concurring to quiet the ſoul under ſuch *diſpenſations.* This may be reduced to two heads.

1. *God in ſuch diſpenſations doth the ſoul no wrong.*

2. *God under ſuch diſpenſations yet is exceeding good to his people.*

1. Firſt, I ſay, *God in ſuch diſpenſations doth the ſoul no wrong.* Reaſon will tell us, we cannot juſtly complain where no injury is done us. Why (ſaith the Church in the *Lamentations*)
Lam. 3. *ſhould a living man complain, a man for the puniſhment of his ſin? A man, a*

living

living man, a *man puniſhed for his ſin*, hath no reaſon to complain. In thy darkeſt hours, thou art yet a living man, and but puniſhed for thy ſin. This is that which the houſholder in the Parable objected to the murmuring labourer; *Friend!* (ſaith he) *I do thee no wrong; didſt not thou agree with me for a penny? take therefore what is thy own, and go thy way; is it not lawful for me to do with my own what I pleaſe?* Mat. 20. 13. Three things are there ſaid to ſatisfie the labourer.

1. *He did him no wrong*; therefore he had no cauſe to complain.

2. *He had agreed with him for a penny*; that was all was his own.

3. *He might do with his own what he pleaſed.*

All theſe things (Chriſtian!) are applicable unto thee. Doth the Lord hide his face from thee? doth he deny thee the light of his countenance, and only inable thee by faith to devolve thy ſoul upon him, and patiently to wait for him? is this all he will pleaſe to grant thee? I ſay firſt, God in theſe diſpenſations doth thee no wrong; what haſt thou earned? Canſt thou challenge theſe ſenſible manifeſtations at Gods hand as due to thee in point of juſtice? if whatſoever influences thou receiveſt from God, muſt be acknowledged influences of grace, not debts, much more theſe; God therefore in denying them to thee, in with-holding them from thee, does thee no wrong at all; if he ſhould refreſh thee with them, it were *ſuperabound-*

ing grace; but if he denies them to thee, he doth thee no injury. Again, *May not God do what he pleaseth with his own?* May man do do it! and is God less free? are not these sensible manifestations, the gales of his Spirit? and shall not that like the wind, blow where it pleaseth? are they not his *sealings?* and shall not he set his seal where he pleseth? especially when in one sense he hath sealed thee to the day of redemption; as I shall shew thee more by and by. Further yet, when thou *accepted'st of the Covenant of Grace* offered to thee, *did not God agree* with thee for a penny? Is not this the Lords Covenant, *Believe and be saved?* This indeed the Lord hath said, That whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise *cast away*. But hath he any where said, That whosoever by faith cometh unto him, shall walk in the uninterrupted light of his countenance? If thou couldest not challenge these comfortable manifestations as thy earnings; yet if thou couldest challenge them as debts from God upon compact, thou mightest indeed complain of wrong done unto thee in the want of them; but there is no such thing: promises indeed there are of such kind of mercies; as there is of outward prosperity, health, riches, &c. to be understood with a reservation to Gods wisdom, so far as he sees good for thy salvation, and for his own glory. But thou wilt say to me, this is a poor ground of satisfaction, if I were now going down into the bottomless pit, God did me no wrong.

2. Secondly,

2. Secondly, Therefore (I say) *God under such dark dispensations, is yet exceeding good and gracious to thee; if thou findest him but inabling thee to behold his face in righteousness, and to watch for his likeness*; to believe and to live an holy life and conversation. *David* in *Psal.* 73. relates under what a great temptation he was, by reason of his own afflicted state, and the prosperity of wicked men, he begins the *Psalm*, *Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart.* Thou art under a great temptation (possibly) by reason of that darkness, in which it pleaseth God to keep thee, as to sensible evidences, yet I will shew thee thou hast reason to say, *Truly God is good to me.* I will open this in a few particulars. Psal. 73.1.

1. Thou hast the *hope of glory.* All thy exercises of grace, thy looking up to God; thy waiting for him; thy fear of offending God; thy trouble when thou hast offended him; thy love, jealousies; thy waiting for God; all thy exercises of grace, are branches springing from that root; and indeed the child of God cannot be without *hope.* These all speak thy *union with Christ*, without whom thou couldest do none of these things: Now where Christ is, there must be the hopes of glory. *Christ in you the hope of glory* (saith the Apostle) It was a portion of Scripture, which often refreshed the soul of this excellent *Lady* (whose funerals we are celebrating) if I remember right, I have heard her say, it was the first piece of Scripture which God Col. 1. 27.

sealed

sealed to her soul: I am sure it was what often refreshed her in her latter daies, and to her very last hour; it was as the sword of *Goliah*, *None to it*, both for the repelling of temptations, and the refreshing of her fainting soul.

Rom. 8. 24. 2. Secondly, By *hope* (saith the Apostle) *we are saved*. Now saith the same Apostle, *Hope that is seen, is no hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for*. The hope of a child of God hath this character, *it maketh not* Rom. 5. 5. *ashamed*. *David* saith no more, but that his *flesh should rest in hope*, Psal. 16. 9. And the Pro. 14. 32. wise man saith no more, but *The Righteous hath hope in his death*. It is not alwaies true, that the righteous man hath *assurance* in his death; but he hath hope in his death, an hope that maketh not ashamed in his death, and so standeth distinguished from the *Hypocrite*, of whom *Job* saith, *Where is the hope of the Hypocrite, when God takes away his soul?*

3. This hope (Thirdly) is enough to give the soul joy. Hence you read of the *rejoycing* Heb. 3. 6. *of hope*, which may be *kept firm to the end*; it is not so with *ordinary hope*. *Solomon* saith, *Hope deferred makes the heart sick*: But it is so with this good hope through grace, because of the *certainty* that attends it; the certainty of the word of promise upon which it leaneth.

4. Fourthly, Observe what the Apostle saith Heb. 6. 18, of this hope, *Heb.* 6. 18, 19, 20. *That by two* 19, 20. *immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lye, we might have a strong consolation, who*

who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the ſoul, ſure and ſtedfaſt; and which entreth into that within the vail, whither the forerunner is for us entred, even Jeſus, who is a Prieſt for ever after the order of Melchiſedeck. The two immutable things, are Gods *Word*, and his *Oath*: His *word of promiſe* that is immutable; *Heaven and Earth ſhall paſs away, before a tittle ſhall paſs from it.* His *Oath*, in that God hath condeſcended to our infirmity, that we might hope ſtedfaſtly. *O nos fœlices* (ſaith *Tertullian*) *quorum gratiâ Deus jurat. O infideles, ſi juranti non credamus!* Theſe two are the grounds of our hope; and the Apoſtle judgeth them ſufficient for an *anchor for our ſouls*, both *ſure*, and *ſtedfaſt*; yea not only ſo, but to raiſe *a ſtrong conſolation to thoſe who fly to it for refuge*, and why? becauſe it is *entred within the vail*; it is *faſtened in Heaven*: it is not like an anchor fallen in a ſandy ſoil, it is entred within the vail; and if you would know how Heaven comes to be ſo ſure a ſoil for a poor Chriſtians hope, the Apoſtle tells you, that *our forerunner Chriſt Jeſus is entred there*, and that in the quality of a Prieſt, an eternal Prieſt, not *after the order of Aaron*, who was daily to offer gifts and ſacrifices for ſin, but after *the order of Melchiſedeck*. Chriſt hath died for our ſins, and riſen again for our juſtification: he hath ſaid, that whoſoever *believeth in him ſhall not be condemned*: he hath made this Covenant with every Believer, and is now entred into Heaven,

Heaven, in the quality of a Priest, an eternal Priest, who stands alwaies before his Fathers Throne, presenting his own mediatory performances and merits unto his Father; the soul believeth in him, then raiseth an *hope of salvation*, though it wants sensible evidences; and this hope is sufficient to give unto the soul a strong consolation, having fled to Christ for *refuge*; however, to be an *anchor to the soul*, and that both *sure* and *stedfast*, which therefore should stay it.

5. Fifthly, *Faith, and strong Faith*, is surely enough to carry a soul to Heaven; though it wants sensible evidences, if it be not, what becomes of the Covenant of Grace? what became of all the promises, repetitions, and branches of that Covenant? but a child of God may have faith, and strong faith, and yet want *sensible consolation*. I say, a Christian may have *faith*; I do not mean only a faith of *assent*, which the *Devils* may have: (Saint *James* saith) *they believe and tremble* (they doubtless do agree to the Propositions of truth in the Scripture) but I mean that *faith* which the Apostle calls, *The faith of Gods Elect*; *Justifying faith*. It was indeed an unwary description, which some ancient Divines gave of justifying faith, calling it a *full perswasion of the Love of God*; and it may be much occasioned by the heat of their opposition to the jejune faith of *Papists*, who would make justifying faith to be *assent to the Proposition of the Word*; it is likely their so describing justifying faith, gave too much advantage to the

the *Antinomian* notion, who to this day, will underſtand nothing of faith under *plerophory*, or full perſwaſion; but undoubtedly the *act of juſtifying faith* lyes lower, *in receiving Chriſt, believing in him, relying upon him, committing our ſelves unto him, &c.* Nor can the other be the act of faith that juſtifieth, being not to be found, but in ſouls that are juſtified. For how can any ſoul whom God doth not love in Jeſus Chriſt, be fully (and juſtly) perſwaded of his love? Now *the Lord loveth the righteous*: until the ſoul be made righteous through *the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt*, it can be no object of divine love. That ſoul who hath opened his *Will* (through divine grace) to receive and embrace Chriſt as tendered in the Goſpel, that is perſwaded to reſt, hang, truſt, rely, commit its ſelf to him, and him alone for ſalvation, that ſoul truly believeth. Now this the ſoul doth that watcheth for Gods likeneſs, though it want ſenſible comforts.

Nay, this faith is *ſtrong faith*. It is the note of a late eminent ſervant of God, that *faith is ſo much the ſtronger, by how much the fewer externals it needs to ſupport it.* It was ſaid of *Abraham*, that he was *ſtrong in the faith, giving glory to God.* Wherein did the ſtrength of *Abrahams* faith appear? *v.* 18. *He ſtaggered not at the promiſe*; he *againſt hope believed in hope*; he had nothing of ſenſe to help his faith; his faith ſtood meerly upon the ſtrength of the word; he had a *word of promiſe*, and he *ſtaggered not* at the promiſe: he Rom. 4. 18, 19, 20, 21.

he was so far from having any help to his faith, from sense that he had all the discouragement and hinderance imaginable, the matter to be believed was, *that God would give him a Son*; for this he had the word of God. *Thou shalt have a Son*, saith God: his wife was past child-bearing; her womb was
Gen.18.12. dead, insomuch that she *laughed*, when she heard the promise, and said, *Shall I of a surety bear a child, who am old? Abraham* himself was beyond the age in which (ordinarily) children are begot; he was an hundred years old. But though he had no incouragement, but all imaginable discouragement from sense, both on his own, and on his wives part, yet (saith the Apostle) *he distrusted not*; he *staggered not at the promise through unbelief*. Thus he was *strong in faith*; and thus he gave *glory to God*, saith the Apostle, giving him the honour of his *power*, of his *truth* and *faithfulness*, *&c.* and this faith *was imputed to him for righteousness*, *v.* 21,22. Now if the weakest faith (being true) be sufficient to carry the soul to Heaven, much more shall a *strong faith*: such a faith as that of *Abraham*, the *Father of the faithful* do it.

6. Lastly, Will it not satisfie thee (Christian!) to tell thee *thou art blessed?* I have a good warrant to do that, *Joh.* 20. 19. (They are the words of our Saviour) to *Thomas*, *Thou hast seen* (saith our Lord) *therefore thou hast believed*: blessed are they that have *not seen, and yet believed*. You are (even out of Christs mouth) more blessed believing, when

when you do not see, than those are who *see*, and therefore *believe*. But I shall enlarge no more upon this first ground of satisfaction for Christians walking in the dark, and seeing no light. I proceed to the second from the word considered, as it signifies to *awake*.

2. *It ought to satisfie Christians walking in the dark, as to sensible consolations, to consider that when in the resurrection they shall awake, they shall be satisfied with the likeness of God.* There is nothing more needful for the explication of the Proposition, than I have already said in the opening of some or other of the Propositions. In short, the substance of what I intend, is this, that if it so pleaseth God, that any child of his should not only spend a great part of his life, without any sensible comforts, any witnessings of the Spirit to his spirit: Nay, if the Lord should call him to die without such sensible evidences, yet he ought not to repine, or murmure against God; but to be silent before him, and trust in him, chearfully considering, that though he dieth, he shall *rise again from the dead*, and in the resurrection he shall be fully, and abundantly satisfied with Gods full and glorious manifestations of himself unto him, when he shall be blessed in the full and glorious enjoyment of God to all eternity.

1. *This is that which God hath agreed with us for*; this is the penny for which he hath contracted. But of this I spake before.

2. This is *infinitely more than any child of God hath merited*, or *can merit at Gods hand*.

It

It will be a great piece of the work of the Saints in Heaven, to admire that rich and infinite grace, which hath brought them thither. Yea, though we should never see Gods face till we come in Heaven; yet we shall see free grace magnified in bringing us thither at last.

3. Lastly, *The satisfaction which the soul shall meet with when it comes in Heaven, will be infinitely more than will make us amends for all the dissatisfactions all the hours of sadness and darkness we have met with in this life:* and infinitely more than will recompence us for all our *faith* and *hope*, all our *watchings* and *waitings* for and upon God. For our duties, we value them above the Scripture rate, if we count them better than *menstrous cloths, and filthy raggs*, or reckon that they deserve any thing at the hand of God other than wrath, and shame, and confusion of faith. And (saith the Apostle, *Rom.* 8. 18. *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.* Every one of you would easily determine this, were I able to shew you but a little of those things, *which eye hath not seen; nor hath ear heard; nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive.* To open to you what it is to *be ever with the Lord*, to see him *face to face*, to see him *as he is*, to be like the *Angels in Heaven*, to have *our bodies made like unto his glorious body*, and *our corruptible to put on incorruption.* I say, were I able to open these, and other expressions, by

Rom. 8. 18.

2 Cor. 13. 12.
1 Thes. 1. 17.
1 Joh. 3. 2.

by which it hath pleased the Holy Ghost in Scripture to express the state of the children of God in glory, you would easily agree this with me, that the joyes and satisfaction in the likeness of God, which shall in Heaven be manifested to the souls of Gods people, sha'l abundantly recompence them, for all their hours of darkness. I have now done with the Explication of the Doctrine: I come to the Application, in which I shall be the shorter, because it hath been wholly practical almost.

Use 1. In the first place, what we have heard, may inform us much concerning the *Lot* and *Duty* of Gods dearest servants. As to their Lot,

1. They may (in this life) be *tempted, persecuted by men, deserted by God*, very much unsatisfied as to the Lords likeness, both in respect of holiness and comfort: we are not by an interest in Christ priviledged from trials; we may have *troubles without*, and *fears from within*. By our turning into the waies of God, we make the world our enemy; by deserting it, we inrage the Devil to a further enmity; indeed we engage God to be our Father, but he is a wise Father, who though he alwaies loves, yet sometimes in prudence he frowns upon a child. But here we must distinguish betwixt a seeming desertion, and a real desertion; betwixt a total, and a partial desertion; betwixt a desertion as to the necessary influences of grace, and as to the

less necessary influences of it; betwixt a desertion for a time, and for ever: God cannot cast off his people for ever; he cannot totally desert them; he cannot withdraw the necessary influences of grace; the union betwixt Christ and the soul cannot be dissolved; there can be no *intercession* of the state of Justification; no total separation of the Spirit from the soul, when once it hath taken up an habitation in it, but as to some influences of grace, not so necessary to salvation, as to consolatory manifestations, as to degrees of quickening and strengthening influences: God may forsake his Saints, and to such a degree, that the soul may to it self seem utterly forsaken.

2. Secondly, You have heard that it is not *repugnant to the justice and goodness of God, to suffer his child to fall asleep in death, without a satisfaction with Gods likeness*, without such *sensible comforts* as others may have. *Light is sown for the righteous; joy for the upright in heart*: But it is like seed sown into the earth, which comes up sometimes sooner, sometimes later; sometimes not till they come in Heaven, sometimes soon after conversion; sometimes they walk all their life time much in the light of the Lords countenance; sometimes they have an *April* day, with vicissitudes of *light* and *darkness*, gleams and showers: sometimes God appears to their souls in the very hour of death; they have been in darkness before, and then they cry out, (as the Martyr to his Brother *Austin*) *He is come,*

Psal. 91.

come, he is come. Sometimes again, the light of this life, goes out *in obscurity* to them, and they go out of this world weeping, yet carrying with them the precious seed of *Faith* and *Love*, they shall return in the resurrection rejoycing, and bring their sheaves with them. This may serve to regulate our expectations, that they rise not too high for dispensations not absolutely necessary to salvation, and to direct our *charity*, that we may not entertain uncharitable thoughts, nor pass uncharitable censures upon those whom we have seen in this life strictly walking with God, yet not dying with sensible comforts.

3. Thirdly, The *Children of God* (as well as others) *shall fall asleep*: Indeed their death is but a sleep, and it shall not be a perpetual sleep. Death shall taste of them, but it *shall not feed upon them. Lazarus sleepeth* (saith our Saviour) but *I go to awake them.* The children of God shall all sleep; but the Lord will come to awake them; the last trump shall sound, and those who are dead in the graves, shall awake, and shall arise; they shall *hear the voice of the Son of God, and live*; their flesh shall rest, but it shall *rest in hope.* The wicked also shall sleep, and their bodies shall rest, but in no hope of a better state in the resurrection; it were well for them, if they might indeed sleep a *perpetual sleep*, and wake no more. Thus far you have been informed

of the Lot of Gods people, and further of their great priviledge, when they awake in the resurrection, to be fully and abundantly satisfied with the Lords likeness. But in order to their *priviledge*, *you have also been informed of their duty.*

1 *Branch.* At all times to keep on *beholding the Lords face in righteousness*; in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, in the righteousness of an holy and innocent life and conversation; *to keep a conscience void of offence both towards God, and towards man*; to be continually labouring *to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord*; to be much in prayer, much in the exercise of *faith, hope, patience.*

2. Especially are they to take care that *in their hours of darkness, they be not wanting to this duty.* And further, doing this, they ought so far to be satisfied, as not to murmure, not to repine, not to think God deals hardly with them; but to be thankful, rejoycing themselves in this confidence, that when they shall awake in the resurrection, they shall have what their heart could wish; they shall be abundantly satisfied with the Lords likeness. Thus far what you have heard serveth you for Instruction.

Use 2. Secondly, What you have heard may reflect with *some check and reproof, to many*

many poor souls who truly fear God, yet are not come up in this thing to their duty. How many do we meet with in the course of our Ministry, who, though Christ be in them, *the hopes of glory*; though they cannot deny what God hath done for their souls; their souls tell them, they have put their trust in God, and committed themselves to the arm of *everlasting righteousness*; they dare not knowingly offend God, but make it their business, and herein exercise themselves to keep a conscience void of offence, both towards God and man; yet because possibly at present they have not those sensible reflections, which others have and they desire, they cannot be satisfied, but are ready to complain, and murmure; and like a teachy child, to throw away, and despise all they have, because they cannot obtain this which they so passionately desire; they can see no ground of hope, they are perswaded, that at last they shall go to Hell, and one day perish with all their profession; they can find no *witnessings*, no *sealings* of Gods Spirit. How often do we hear these, and such like sad expressions from them? But Christians, I beseech you consider,

1. What God said to *Jonah*, *Do you well to be angry?* do you well to repine and murmure? *David Psal.* 25. 3. prayes *they might be ashamed who are transgressours without a cause*: Are you not transgressours

without a cause? hath not God given you more than you have earned? hath he not given you the penny you contracted with him for? why are you angry then? why discontented? why lift you up your voice against Heaven?

2. Again, *How many thousands are there in the world, who have* (as creatures) *as much claim to God as you, for whom the Lord hath not done so much for as he hath done for you:* He hath given them portions in this life, and hath sent them away; they have pleasure, riches, honours, &c. but no faith, no hope, nothing of grace, no interest in Christ; they are dead in trespasses and sins, perishing to all eternity: You only want a spiritual banquet; the most want spiritual bread, yet creatures under the same natural capacity that you are.

3. Though in one sense *you be not sealed*; yet in another sense you are *sealed*. You read in Scripture of the *sealing of the Spirit*, Ephes. 1. 13. chap. 4. 30. 2 Cor. 1. 22. We usually interpret those texts of *Assurance*, because *seals are used for confirmation*: But possibly there is another sense as agreeable to the mind of the Holy Ghost. *A seal* (you know) *leaveth the signature or impression of it upon the wax*; the wax hath the image of the seal upon it. The Lords renewing and stamping his Image upon the soul, is a *sealing of it to the day of Adoption*. There is a seal of *Regeneration*

Eph. 1. 13. 4. 30. 2 Cor. 1. 22.

and

and *Sanctification*, as well as a *seal* of *Assurance*; and though the latter sealing be infinitely sweet, and pleasant to the soul; yet the former is that which fitteth us for the Kingdom of Heaven; *Without holiness no man can see God.* Is there not as much (think you) of the operation of the Spirit seen in *sanctifying, quickening, strengthening* a soul, as in *comforting* it, and *assuring* it of salvation? it is O our great mistake that we will look upon nothing as the fruit of the Spirit, but *joy* and *peace*; certainly the renewing and sanctifying of the soul is as much the operation of the Spirit; and the strengthening and quickening of the soul, in the performance of duty, or in the resistance of corruption, is as much the fruit of the Spirit in the soul, as comforting and refreshing the soul is.

4. If God hath thus far inabled you, *viz.* to behold his face in righteousness, and to watch for his likeness, he hath given you *the necessaries of salvation*, the things which *accompany salvation*. What you want, is only what a soul may want, and yet get to Heaven. *Faith* and *Holiness*, they are the necessaries to salvation: a soul may go to Heaven without *Joy* and *Peace*; without *Faith* and *Holiness* there is no salvation. When God hath given you the bread of life, have you not reason to be satisfied? Though you want that banquet with which he sometimes

is pleased to entertain the souls of his people?

The Example of this rare and eminent servant of God, might have at once (as to this thing) have instructed and reproved many unthankful, discontented, and repining Christians. It had pleased the Lord to strip her naked of most of her creature comforts; he had sent such messengers as he sent to *Job*, to her, one after another, till at last death came to assure her all (as to this life) was gone; she was under a sad and inexpressible trial of affliction: It is true in this sad and afflicted state as to her outward concerns, she had her lived intervals, some glimmerings of divine light: sometimes *Joy* came over night, but sorrow came again in the morning; the clouds returned after rain. That word, *Col.* 1. 27. *Christ in you the hope of Glory*, often refreshed her; but her adversary was busie, her comforts inconstant, her assurance little; yet she *lived in hope*, and blessed God, and was thankful: she endured violent pains, and in her suffering acted a strong faith; and in the saddest distempers would cry out, *Oh Sir, Satan would have me let go my hold on Christ, but I will trust in God till I die: Though he kills me, yet I will trust in him; tell me I pray (Sir) may I not?* She died in hope: her very last words were *I hope, I hope*; to make good that of the wise man; that *the righteous man hath hope in*

in his death; and by hope I doubt not but she is *saved*, and now seeing what she hoped, and with so great patience waited for. Hearke and be ashamed, thou murmuring and unthankful Christian, that art not so much as she disadvantaged from the providence of God, yet canst not tell how to be silent, because thou wantest consolatory manifestations.

Use 3. In the third place; What you have heard in this discourse may be useful to us for Consolation.

1. *On our own behalf.*
2. *On the behalf of others.*

1. As to our selves, *concerning our darkbours*. The people of God are ordinarily very *jealous* of their Saviours love, and very *suspicious* of their own *sincerity*; they know not how to trust as the one, nor be confident as to the other, without the incouragement of comfortable reflections; nor how to believe they shall go to Heaven, if they go not to it in the sight of it. The wise man saith, a man knoweth not *love* nor *hatred, by all that is before him in this life*; so that none ought to determine of himself in this case, from any *external dispensations of providence*. A Christian may be poor, and afflicted, and yet a favourite of God; and as he ought not to judge himself from these more external dispensations; so neither ought he to judge himself from the want

of

of ſenſible manifeſtations to his inward man. The child of God may walk in darkneſs: *Job*, *David*, *Heman*, *Aſaph*; all had their dark hours: if therefore that be our lot, yet this is no ground of diſcouragement to us; no ground for any ſad concluſion againſt our ſouls, as to their beſt intereſts.

2. Again, what we have heard, affords us a great *comfort againſt the fear of death.* The Scripture calleth death, *The King of terrours.* And the Apoſtle ſaith, that even Gods people (through the fear of it) *are all their life time ſubject to bondage.* It is the common portion of all the Sons of men. *It is appointed for all men once to die*; and it is our great intereſt to arm our ſelves againſt the fears of it: you have heard from the former diſcourſe,

Job 18.14.

Heb. 2.14.

1. *That death is but a ſleep.*

2. *That it is not a perpetual ſleep*, but a ſleep from which we ſhall awake.

3. *That at our awaking out of that ſleep*, we ſhall be ſatisfied with Gods likeneſs.

1. I ſay (firſt) *death is but a ſleep.* It is not an *annihilation* of a man, that miſapprehenſions of it make it terrible to a man in his natural capacity. It is not (to the child of God) *the ſecuring of a perſon* to the Judgement of the great day. In this notion unbelievers have reaſon to conſider it, what is it then? It is but a *ſleep.* This gentle notion of death, ſhould take the terrour of it off our ſpirits: no man is afraid to go to ſleep; why ſhould we be more afraid to

die

die but for unbelief and a reproving conscience?

2. Were it indeed a *perpetual sleep*, there would be less of relief in it; but there shall be an *awaking out of this sleep*: though the night be long, there shall be a morning. This doctrine of the Resurrection is indeed the great argument of comfort against death. The Apostle having mentioned it to the *Thessalonians*, to relieve them as to their sorrow for their friends asleep in the Lord, concludes, wherefore *comfort your selves with these words*.

3. But yet the *feast to which we shall awake in the Resurrection*, is of a further consequence, to relieve us under disturbances of this nature. This was that which cheared the *Martyr*, that *although he had an ill Supper, he should have a good breakfast*.

The sleep of death, is not like the sleep the Prophet speaks of. When a man dreams he is at a feast, and when he awaketh behold he is an hungry. Indeed there is no dreaming in this sleep; but when the child of God awaketh from it in the resurrection, he shall awake to a feast, not an imaginary, but a real feast, where he shall be filled with the likeness of God to all eternity.

3 *Branch*. Lastly, What we have heard administers *great consolation to such as mourn for their friends fallen asleep in the Lord*. Have we had any friends, who have made it their business

business to behold the face of the Lord in righteousness, and to watch for the Lords likeness, who herein have *exercised themselves to keep a conscience void of offence both towards God, and towards men*; and possibly have had their sad hours for a long time sitting in darkness, and seeing no light; and whose Candle possibly hath at last gone out in obscurity, as to visions of peace? They have indeed died, breathing and thirsting after God, hoping and trusting in God, and quietly committing their selves unto him; but not being able to say, *Lo this is my God, I have waited for him; this is my God, I have waited for him; I will rejoyce and be glad in his salvation.* I say, have we known any so? have we had at any time any such friends, under such circumstances? possibly we have been troubled, and have had sad thoughts for them; but there is no reason; what though they have *fallen asleep*, they *shall awake*; what though they fell asleep not *satisfied*, they shall *be satisfied with the Lords likeness*, when they awake, *they shall be satisfied.* There are thousands that die without any such troubled thoughts. Some it may be with bold and groundless confidences, who will awake with terrour and trembling. There be many that shall in that day say, *Lord, Lord, open unto us, have we not prayed in thy name, and prophecied in thy name, and in thy name cast out Devils? to whom the Lord shall say, Depart from me, I know you not, you workers of iniquity.*

Matth. 7.

iniquity. But there is no ſoul who hath truly believed in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who hath walked ſtrictly and cloſely with God, and made it his, or her buſineſs to ſerve the Lord in truth, to mortifie his, or her luſts and corruptions; but though it may live in the dark, and (it may be) die in ſome diſſatisfactions, but that ſoul ſhall awake in a glorious reſurrection, and ſo awaking ſhall be ſatisfied, and filled with the conſolations of God. Mourn for looſe walking Profeſſors, who have lived here without any fear of God, or any care to pleaſe God; and yet when they die, have talkt of full perſwaſions, and been full of preſumptuous confidences; but be not troubled for holy and gracious ſouls, whoſe lives have been full of faith and holineſs: though it may be they have had their fears while they lived, and a dark hour when they died hath clouded them, yet doubt not of them; mourn not for them; thoſe perſons have not died without hope; do not you mourn as thoſe without hope; their ſalvation is certain, whether it hath been aſcertained to them, or no, hoping in God, committing their ſouls unto God, truſting in him, walking with him, they ſhall not be aſhamed: trouble not your ſelves for them; though *they fall, they ſhall riſe*; though they ſleep, they ſhall awake, though through a too much love-jealouſie, or through the wiſe diſpenſation of God; when they fell aſleep, they were unſatisfied; yet when in the reſurrection they

they shall awake, they shall be satisfied, ineffably, plenteously, abundantly satisfied with the Lords likeness; and in the joy of that glorious day, they shall forget all their former sorrows.

Use 4. What you have heard may be applied by way of *Caution*,

1. To all *ungodly impenitent sinners*, such as never *beheld* the face of God in righteousness, nor at all watch for his likeness, yet live without any fears, it may be with strong confidences, and doubt not of being satisfied with the Lords likeness in the resurrection of the just. Oh! the presumptuous groundless hopes of an infinite number of Hypocrites! they make no question of salvation, and think it great uncharitableness for any to doubt of their eternal welfare; yet whoso observeth their lives, seeth them neither exercising a good conscience towards God nor man; instead of walking in righteousness, they live in all manner of wickedness, yet they will tell you, they hope to be saved by Jesus Christ; they are of the number of those whom the Apostle speaks of, who are *dead in trespasses and sins*, who still have their *conversation* in the world, *according to the power of the Prince of the Air, who lives and works in the children of disobedience, and walk fulfilling the lusts of the flesh, and the desires of the mind, without Christ, and his righteousness, strangers to the Covenant of Promise, having no*

true

true ground of hope, living without a God in the world, in all neglect of duty towards God and man; yet these men hope to be saved; these men hope in the resurrection, that they also shall be filled *with the likeness of God*. I shall but offer one text of Scripture to such *bold presumptuous sinners*; it is that in *Deut.* 29. 18, 19, 20. *Lest there should be amongst you man, or woman, or family, or tribe, whose heart turneth away this day from the Lord our God, to go and serve the gods of these Nations, lest there should be amongst you a root that beareth gall and wormwood. And it cometh to pass, that when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart, saying, I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of my heart, to add drunkenness to thirst. The Lord will not spare him, but then the anger of the Lord, and his jealousie, shall smoak against that man, and all the curses that are written in this Book, shall be upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under Heaven, and the Lord shall separate him to evil, out of all the tribes of Israel, according to all the curses of the Covenant, that are written in this Book of the Law, &c.* None can hope for the favour of God here or hereafter, but those only who are clothed with the righteousness of Christ, and who live an holy and righteous conversation before God, declining all manner of sin and wickedness, and doing the whole will of God; and such who in this course of life (through the grace of God inabling Deut. 29. 18, 19, 20.

inabling them) shall be found believing in God, and waiting for him in those waies of holiness and well pleasing in his sight.

Others indeed may pretend that they hope; but indeed, could you look into the secrets of their souls, you would find them without any true hope, not attending to the eternal concerns of their souls, while they are in health and at liberty, they are perfectly careless, neither hope nor fear much: when God alarums them with a conviction, a terrour of conscience, or a sickness, that looks as if it would determine their daies, then they begin to consider, and as drowning men lay hold of every rush, every twig, never considering whether it hath in it strength enough to bear them; they lay hold upon every thing as a ground of hope. *God made them*, and therefore they hope he will not damn them, (as if *Hell* were prepared for none.) Christ died for all; as if (supposing that were true) all therefore should be saved: They have been good *Church-men*, *paid every man his own*; *they have been no drunkards*, *no swearers*, *&c.* These, and such like foundations of hope they lay; but (saith *Job*) *Where is the hope of the Hypocrite*, *when the Lord takes away his soul?* And again, *Job* 8. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. *Can the Rush grow up without mire? or the Flag without water? while it is yet in its greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb: So are*

are the paths of all that forget God; and the Hypocrites hope shall perish, whose hope shall be cut off, and whose trust shall be a Spiders web; he shall lean upon his house, but it shall not stand; he shall hold it fast, but it shall not indure.

2 *Branch.* Again (as I before hinted to you) what you have heard must be cautiously understood, and practised by Gods people. I told you, that such as fear the Lord; such as are inabled by him to behold his face in righteousness, and to watch for his likeness; though they see not Gods face in *visions of peace*; though *they live*; though God calleth them to die in the dark, *yet they should be satisfied*; but how satisfied, you have also heard; not so, as to sit down and think they have enough, and never look after the light of Gods countenance; no, this is impossible; it is their duty to be so far satisfied, as *not to murmure, not to repine*; but not to be so satisfied, as not to cry, and pray unto God for further discoveries of himself unto their souls. But it is more than time I should shut up this discourse.

Use 5. Lastly, This Doctrine may be applied by way of *Exhortation*, and it looks upon all persons.

1. *Upon unrighteous creatures.* Such as are in a state of sin, without the *imputed righteousness of Christ*, without any care of themselves;

ſelves, as to a righteous converſation. That they would return from the vanity of their courſes unto God, and labour for a *ſtate of Righteouſneſs*. There are many Arguments in Scripture to inforce this. *The unrighteous ſhall not inherit the Kingdom of God*, 1 Cor. 6. 9. *The righteous Lord loveth righteouſneſs*, Pſal. 11. But I ſhall only inſiſt upon what I find in the text. You have heard what I mean by righteouſneſs, and may eaſily apply what I have already ſaid, to inform you what it is to be in a ſtate of righteouſneſs, viz.

1. *To be clothed with the righteouſneſs of him who is the Lord our Righteouſneſs.*

2. *To lead a converſation holy in every thing, and conformable to the mind and will of God.* Watching againſt ſin, and all temptations to ſin, and watching to all duty; both thoſe of an holy communion with God, and thoſe of an holy converſation before God. Two great Arguments to inforce this Exhortation may be drawn from my diſcourſe.

1. This is the only way to *behold the Lords face.* No way to behold Gods face in this life, but *in righteouſneſs.* No hopes hereafter to *behold his face in glory, but in righteouſneſs.* Men may pleaſe themſelves with *dreams*, and flatter themſelves with *vain hopes*; but no man in this life ſeeth any thing of God; no man enjoyeth any thing of God but the righteous man. *The Lord heareth not ſinners*;

sinners; the Lord accepteth not the unrighteous person; nor can any (without righteousnes) ever hope to behold the face of the Lord in glory. Those who are not clothed with the righteousnes of Christ shall indeed behold the Lords face in the day of Judgement, but it shall be his angry face; and it shall be against their will that they behold the Lords face then; for *they shall hide themselves in mountains, and rocks, and dens, and shall cry to the mountains, and to the rocks to fall on them, and to hide them from him who sitteth on the Throne.* They indeed shall be filled, but it shall be with their own waies, (for the recompence of their hands shall be given them) and with the Lords wrath, and vengeance on them for their sins; for this they shall have at the Lords hand; they shall *lye down in sorrow.* Those alone, who while they lived, beheld the face of God in righteousnes, shall enjoy any thing of God here, or in the life which is to come. They only shall hear that blessed sentence, *Come you blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.* This is my first Argument.

2. It is no small thing *that righteous persons have enough in this life, even in their darkest hours, to give them satisfaction.* A sinner hath not enough when he is at the fullest, to give him a satisfaction; his *eye* (even then) *will not be satisfied with seeing; nor his ear with hearing; nor his hand with griping*; he will never have enough: yet in his life he takes his

portion, *Son, remember* (saith *Abraham* in that Parable, *Luk.* 16. 24.) *that in thy lifetime thou hadst thy good things.* But now see the state of a child of God: take him when he is lowest, he hath what is reasonably enough to give him satisfaction: it may be he hath not at all times his overflowings of joy, his spiritual superfluities (as I may call them) but he hath the perpetual feast of a good conscience. Are not these two things enough to perswade some soul into a study, and labour after righteousness? is it nothing to have communion with God, to behold his face? it is the happiness of the blessed Angels to be ever *beholding the face of God*; and certainly man is not capable of a greater priviledge than this is. It is the happiness of Heaven to behold *him as he is, to see him face to face*; and is this no ingagement to lay upon you to seek righteousness; to tell you, that if you get into a state of righteousness, you shall be some of them who shall see the face of God another day in glory, who shall be heirs of glory, and joynt-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ: Are your lusts more worth than Heaven? and your carnal pleasures more valuable, than the pleasures of beholding God, and being satisfied with his likeness?

2 *Branch.* Lastly, What you have heard may be of use to perswade you that fear the Lord, to *your duties under the ecclipses of divine love.* It is the great business of a Christian to study, and know, and practise what is his duty in

in every estate. You have heard that it is the lot of Gods people, sometimes to walk in the dark, and see no light; what their duty is under such a dispensation, I have at large shewed you; I beseech you that you would be consciencious in the performance of it.

1. *Do not murmure or repine against God*; he doth you no wrong.

2. *Do not you leave beholding God, though it pleaseth not God to look upon you with such a kind aspect, as* (possibly) *you desire.* Do not give over your waiting upon him in prayer, and in all his Ordinances. But on the contrary.

1. *Appear often before him in the righteousness of Christ, and plead that with him.*

2. *Walk close with God, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord.*

3. *Keep your watch; take heed of spiritual sleep, giving way to temptation, or to your own corruptions.*

4. *Believe for that which you do not see*; hope for him whom you cannot yet behold; and with patience wait for the Lord: Never yet was a waiting soul ashamed, nor a believing soul confounded: never yet did an holy soul perish. Do this, and satisfie your self with holy *David*, *That when you awake in the Resurrection of the Just, you shall be abundantly satisfied with the Lords likeness*; and

Comfort your selves with these words.

A Narrative of the holy Life and Death of the Lady Katharine Courten.

Some useful Observations *upon the latter part of the Life, and the Righteous Death of the* Right Honourable, *the Lady* Katharine Courten, *one of the younger Daughters of the* Right Honourable, John, *late* Earl *of* Bridgewater, *and late wife of* Will. Courten Esq;.

I Shall not undertake the pourtraiture of this excellent Lady from head to foot; partly because the circumstances of her *birth*, *breeding* and *education*, were much the same with her elder Sisters, whose Copy I have given more fully, so as I should but repeat the same things again; partly because indeed, till the latter two years of her life, she was not at all known to me; and partly because that part of her life was it alone, wherein she made not her self known to the world.

It was about the first day of *April*, *anno* 1650. that her Lap (having received an invitation from her noble Sister (whom we have formerly in this treatise discoursed of) came to spend the retired part of her life with her at *Chaplifield-house* in *Norwich*. Her time of health with us was about three quarters of a year; the other was her dying time.

I will

I will suppose that none who knew her derived from *Adam*, will think she was not subject to like passions and infirmities with others of the same blood: but as these were not such, but were consistent enough with eminent degrees of grace; so neither were they her pleasure, but her burthen. And the Apostle tells us, that *we have an High Priest, who can have compassion upon our infirmities, being touched with a feeling of them; having been in all points tempted like as we are, only without sin.* Heb. 4. 15.

I shall only copy out this excellent servant of God, so far, as the abundant grace of God appeared in her, for *our consolation*, and *our imitation* of her example.

Six things I observed in her, in the daies of her health, speaking much of the grace of God bestowed on her.

1. The first was her *chearful, quiet, thankful submission to Divine Providence.* I have not known (hardly read of any, *Job* alone excepted) whom the Lord was pleased to blow upon with a series of sharper providences, than he did upon this eminent Lady; he had even made her a mark for all his arrows: I have often thought her afflicted condition much parallel to that of *Job*; he had great *substance, dear relations*, an *healthful body*, and in a moment lost the comfort of them all.

This noble *Lady* was removed from the great plenty of her Fathers house, by marriage, to *William Courten*, Son and her of

Sir *William Courten*, with whom she enjoyed a plenteous estate, inferiour to few subjects of *England*; *Silver was with her as dust, and as the stones of the field.* He gave her an Husband, who was to her the *man of her bosom, the delight of her eyes*, and as the *breath of her nostrils*, he blessed them both with a numerous off spring: Thus he had made her mountain to stand strong; and in this height of her prosperity, she began to say, *I shall never be moved.* But it was not long before the Lord hid the face of his providence from her, and *she was troubled.* First he *strips off her branches*, taking away one child after another, until only *one Son*, and *one Daughter* were left unto her. Then he causeth an *East-wind* to blow upon her estate, scattering, and breaking the ships that went for treasures to the *Indies*, every year bringing some sad tydings or other of this nature, until the Lord had stript her naked; and her dearest Husband was not only ruined as to his whole estate, but involved in an irrecoverable debt; and this noble *Lady*, who lately equalized her greatest friends, in an affluence of the good things of this life, became into a condition of dependance upon them, and through the violence of men, is separated from her *dearest relation*, who was now constrained in a remote Land to seek himself a City of Refuge, and to secure her self from the snare of an oath (which she judged unnatural) it was, that she retired to her noble

noble Sister at *Norwich*; yet in all this *she charged not God foolishly*: The Lord had given, and the Lord had taken, and *she blessed the Name of the Lord*; with a meek and quiet spirit humbly kissing the Rod of God that was upon her, and *holding her peace, because it was the Lords doing*, who she freely acknowledged might do with *her* and *hers*, *what he pleased*; and she could not say unto him, *what dost thou?* Yea not only so, but taken up with the admiration of the goodness of God to her, seen in the readiness of her noble friends to shew kindness to her and her remaining children in their afflicted state; and much more affected with this, than with any trouble for *Gods* severer dispensations to her. I have often heard her say, *That she now saw more of the goodness of God in one ten pounds which a friend sent her, and could better acknowledge it, than she did before in those many thousands which were her own.* Nay, when after all this, it pleased the Lord to return upon her, and to lay his hand upon her *skin* and *flesh*, visiting her with a tormenting, incurable disease; yet she laid her hand upon her mouth; and not only acknowledged the Lords justice, but also admired his mercy; and if at any time it pleased God to give her any respiration from her tormenting pains, how straightened was her tongue in the expressing the thankfulness of her heart? how did praise wait in her thankful soul for God? Sometimes indeed

I saw

I saw her troubled at Gods more external dispensations to her; and that to a degree beyond what could be called a just sense of them; but upon discourse with her, I constantly found the cause. Either a *bitter reflection* upon the *influence*, which the sad providence of God, blasting her dear Husbands estate, had upon many other persons and families which she could never think on without tears, and which she would often profess more troubled her, than her own, her dearest husbands and childrens concerns: Or else *some fears heightened in her by the advantage her subtil adversary took of her afflicted state*, lest the Rod of God should be an indication of his wrath; the dread of which infinitely more troubled her, than her low condition, as to the comforts of this life, upon which the Lord had taught her to set a very cheap valuation. Verily it hath often startled me, to suppose my soul in her souls stead, and to think what I should have been, under such dispensations, as it pleased God to measure out to her, which she imbraced with wondrous degrees of meekness and chearfulness.

2. A second thing eminently conspicuous in this Excellent *Lady*, was, *her exceeding tenderness of conscience, and watchful jealousie over her own heart*. It would have made a good Christian to have suspected himself to have seen her scrupulosity of every action, how wary she was in setting every foot, how afraid

afraid of the leaſt ſin againſt God; ſhe often diſcovered unto me (living with her under the ſame roof) the ſtate of her ſoul, what ſhe found, what ſhe wanted, what ſhe reſolved upon, what grievances, and what comforts at any time ſhe had; but ſcarce ever did it without adjuring me to be faithful unto her, in telling her what I judged of her condition in reference to eternity: indeed the hearing her ſtrictly charging me not to flatter her, but to deal faithfully with her, hath often made me tremble, leſt through temptation or weakneſs, I ſhould fall ſhort of my duty to her. Indeed, ſhe was over-jealous, and through fear of ſin, would ſometime ſcruple what was her duty, yea her greateſt duty: How often did I hear from her theſe words?

Oh Sir, Satan is very buſie, he would have me let go my hold on my dear Saviour; but I am reſolved to keep it until I die; Sir, may I not? I beſeech you tell me if you think I may not.

3. A third thing was, *her admirable love to publick Ordinances.* She might truly ſay with *David, How amiable are thy Tabernacles O Lord of Hoſts?* This very thing was her great motive to chuſe her dear Siſters family for the place of her receſs, and rejoyce in it, by reaſon of the private Chapel, where the Ordinances of God were ordinarily diſpenſed, and ſhe could attend them without any publick notice taken of her (as beſt ſuited her preſent condition) ſhe was never either abſent from,

from, or tardy at a Sermon, when by reason of the prevailing of her bodily distempers, she could not go down the stairs, she chose rather to be carried down, than to miss the Ordinance, till her Physicians advice restrained her: Nor was her carriage at Religious exercises less exemplary; her outward posture discovered with what reverence and trembling she heard the holy Word of God; she received the Word of God *as the Word of God.*

4. *Her secret communion with God was as remarkable.* Her way was not to set a trumpet to her mouth, when she went to her devotions; but whatever company was in the house, she was exceeding certain to her hours of secret prayer; and in her discourse continually commended it, as that by which a Christian comes best to understand his own heart; and by her countenance and discourse, when she came from her closet, it was easie for us who conversed with her, to judge what she had been doing: she was much in prayer, much in tears, much in reading the holy Scriptures, in reading over good books, and notes of Sermons, which her self had taken; and (as we could judge by her discourse) much in the application of what she read to her own soul, and examining her heart by them. Thus you have her copy towards God, though the lineaments of her perfections in this are imperfectly drawn, and much is left to be understood. I omit any discourse of her intellectual and moral virtues; she was a Lady of great

great knowledge, prudence, humility, modesty, gravity and sobriety of behaviour, temperance, courtesie, nobleness of spirit, &c. but my design is to shew you how far she was an excellent Christian.

5. A fifth thing remarkable in her, was, her *well ordered tender love to her dearest relations.* None could by the dejection of her countenance have known that the providence of God had blown cross upon her, had not some sad thoughts for the exiled state of her dear Husband, sometimes darkened her joy, and disturbed her thoughts; nor was her love seen only in fond expressions, and a fondness of behaviour, in which the love of the most evaporates. Her husband and childrens person were exceeding dear to her; but their souls were more exceeding dear: She was acquainted with no Christian, whom she did not importune for prayers for her dear husband and children. I remember it was her great request to me in a great sickness which she had about a year before she died, when we thought she had received the sentence of death, *That I would not in any prayers forget her husband and children when she should cease to be*; for her husband, *that God would be with him, and keep him from the temptations and pollutions of that Popish Country into which the Providence of God had driven him*: And for her children, *that Jesus Christ might be formed in them.* It was the great ambition of this *Elect Lady*, that her children might be found

walking

walking in the Truth; this was the *portion she desired for them*; this the treasure, even a *treasure in Heaven, where moth could not corrupt, nor thief break through nor steal.* How far it pleased God to hear her, her worthy and only Son (yet surviving) being at that time in his childhood) is a living testimony, who, as by his religious and virtuous dispolition, he demonstrates that the prayers of his Mother were not ineffectual for him, nor *the Law of his Mother forgotten by him:* So having since the death both of his Mother and Father visited *Italy* (where his Father died) is able to satisfie the world, that his Father died in the communion of the *Protestant Church* (notwithstanding the impudent assertions of some Popelings amongst us) being so kept by the power of God; that although he daily conversed with persons of that Religion, yet they were able to prevail nothing with him; but that he died in a perfect abomination of the *superstitious vanities* of that fond Religion, and left with his friend there, a perfect testimony of it to be communicated to his Son (as it was accordingly) and if there were no other, yet their denial of him a room amongst them for a burial-place, and inforcing his friends to bury him in the place of *their Heresicks* (of which his surviving Son can testifie) is a testimony beyond the contradiction of any, unless such whose tongues are less considerable, because they resolve to keep them under no government of Truth.

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6. A sixth thing remarkable in this *Excellent Lady*, was, *her faithfulneſs to her friends*: Not an ordinary faithfulneſs ſeen in keeping counſels, and concealing ſecrets, in ordinary help and aſſiſtance, but a *ſpiritual faithfulneſs*, diſcerned in a prudent admoniſhing and reproving her friends, *not ſuffering ſin upon them*; a piece of faithfulneſs exceeding rare in this flattering age: nor in this would ſhe ſpare her deareſt relations, were her affection to them never ſo great, her obligations never ſo many, ſhe truly judged that her affections were thus beſt ſhewn, her obligations thus beſt diſcharged, by ſaving their ſouls from death; remembring that of *Solomon*, *As an ear-ring of gold, and as an ornament of fine gold, ſo is a wiſe reproof upon an obedient ear.*

Whoſo looked wiſtly upon her in the daies of her liberty, ſaw theſe chains about her neck, theſe jewels of grace adorning her converſation, her carriage was *grave and ſober*, yet innocently *facete* and *chearful*. The *nobleneſs of her ſpirit* diſcovered it ſelf in a ſweet *affability* and *courteſie* of behaviour towards all, an admiſſion of perſons far beneath her quality, to a great freedom of converſe with her, eſpecially if they were ſuch as *feared God*, and whom ſhe diſcerned to have any *experience in his waies*. As God had indued her with a rare degree of knowledge, a piercing wit, and a notable judgement, and other rare parts and indowments; ſo it was her conſtant buſineſs to make an improvement of them for his

his glory. Her delight was in the Book of God, in that she read, in that she meditated night and day. The hours she spent out of her closet, not in Publick Ordinances (which were not many) were usually spent by her in discourses tending to edification; nor was she ever more in her element, than when by debate with others she was lifting out some truth, in order to the further information of her judgement, or guidance of her practice: she was impatient of hearing what she conceived was contrary to truth, or which gave way to the least sin against God; which evidently shewed, that a zeal for God had eaten her up; though possibly sometimes her passion betrayed her to some failing, through some misapprehensions from which she could not be concluded free, being a Daughter of *Adam*, subject to like infirmities with others.

Thus, for some few months, she went out, and came in with us, and we began to bless our selves in the providence of God, who had sent amongst us so eminent an example of holiness to go before us, and to be an helper to us in the waies of God. But our wise God would let us know that we rejoyced in a gourd that might *go down in a night*.

To make her a perfect pattern of his free grace; he who in his wisdom had already taken away the most of her children, bereaved her of the comfort of her dearest yoke-fellow, and stript her naked of her worldly affluences, returns again, and visits her person

person with his severe afflicting hand.

The nature of her distemper was such as it at first confined her to her chamber, and at once deprived her both of her health, and what she valued far more, her ordinary liberty of enjoying God in his Publick Ordinances: yet for several months, she was not a close prisoner, but had the liberty of her chamber, an ability to discourse with her friends, and enjoyed much freedom in family-communion with God, and her more secret communion with him.

But this was not enough to satisfie her thirsty soul; she would now be often crying out, *How amiable are thy Tabernacles O God? my soul longeth, yea even fainteth for the Courts of God. My heart and my flesh cryeth out for the living God. The Sparrow hath found an house, and the Swallow a nest; where she might lay her young, even thine Altars O Lord of Hosts my King, my God.*

During the time of this confinement to her chamber, she had little (as before) to divert her thoughts from a too much poring upon Gods sad dispensations to her; her affliction also was now doubled through want of Publick Ordinances; her bodily distemperature daily increased upon her: she very seldom heard from her Husband; and what she heard, was but sad tydings, adding still affliction to affliction, one sorrow to another. This indeed was a fit time for our grand adversary, to play his game; and he who is

watchful enough upon all opportunities to ruine our souls, could not miss so fair a one as was here offered. While she was therefore *in the wilderness of solitude and affliction*, the tempter came; and even from this time to her dying day, he incessantly followed her with successive temptations, if it had been possible to have baffled her faith and hope in God.

You read in Scripture of Satans *Depths, Devices, Methods:* Many a devise he used; into many a depth he dived: various were the methods he practised, for the final ruine of this rare and excellent person; but it was not possible to destroy her Elect soul for which Christ had died.

Have you seen or read of the General of an Army, fighting a potent and a subtil adversary, how he gains his ground by inches; now gains, and by and by loseth what he hath got, being forced to give the ground he had gained; and again to dispute for what he was once possessed of: Have you seen the adversary inforced to retreat; but retreating to another work, and being forced from that, retreating to a third: this you might have seen in this spiritual fight betwixt this eminent Lady, and the great Dragon.

1 *Tempt.* Her first *Temptation was, to doubt of Gods love, and to distrust him for her eternal salvation, because of Gods sad dispensations to her.* This was one of Satans weakest batteries, yet

yet ſo managed and advantaged with the increaſe of her trials, that for ſome weeks ſhe had much ado to grapple with her adverſary here. I having the advantage of frequent diſcourſe with her Ladiſhip, and perceiving the ſtone upon which ſhe ſtumbled, indeavoured her aſſiſtance, partly remembring her,

1. Of what *Solomon* ſaith, That none can judge of *love or hate by all that is before him*: For it may fall out alike to him that is *ſpiritually wiſe*, and to him that is *ſpiritually a fool*. Eccleſ. 9. 1.

2. Partly by minding her of what the Apoſtle tells us, *That God chaſteneth whom he loveth, and ſcourgeth every one whom he receiveth*. Heb. 12. 6.

3. Partly arguing thus with her; If afflictions be tokens of *divine wrath*, then *health* and *proſperity* are *ſigns of divine love*, which is evidently falſe.

4. Partly by *remembring her of the many examples of Gods children in Scripture*, to whom God had wrung out bitter waters in a full cup; who yet at that time when they were ſo afflicted, were undoubtedly beloved of God, and exceeding precious in his eyes. Such were *Joſeph*, *David*, *Job*, *Daniel*, and many others recorded in Scripture. With theſe, and ſuch like Arguments I had ſatisfied her ſanctified reaſon and judgement, and thought I ſhould have heard no more of this temptation. But ſoon

after it was inforced. Two things she had to say:

1. *The greatness of her affliction spake more than a chastisement with a rod*; she was scourged with Scorpions.

2. *The Lords multiplying afflictions, and repeating sad Providences to her, seemed to argue that he had a quarrel against her:* Why else should he return upon her body, when he had served an execution upon all she had besides. To this I replied;

1. That the afflictions of Gods people are not called chastisements, because they are light or little; but because they come from the hand of a gracious Father, not as legal demands of satisfaction to divine Justice offended, because they flow from a principle of love, not of wrath, and are designed to a gracious end.

2. That for the multitude of them: *Job* had as many, yet was a person singularly beloved of God; and one of whom God gave testimony, that there was *not one like him in all the East.*

3. That as the afflictions of *Job* were of divers kinds, and exceeding heavy; so the succession of them was much like to hers. God first took away his children, then his estate; and last of all, let loose Satan upon his person, and gave him a liberty to tempt him.

With these, and such like considerations, I endeavoured to arm her against this fiery dart; at last it pleased him, *who was there-*

fore

fore tempted, that he might be able to succour those that were tempted, by his mighty power to lift her over this stone of stumbling, and she became fully satisfied, that she could neither from the greatness, nor multitude of her trials, conclude any thing against the love of God to her.

2 *Tempt. If during her afflictions she did not also want the inward consolations of the holy Spirit*; but alas! (saith she) I have no inward assurance of Gods love; no sensible consolations, &c.

Perceiving that her adversary had betaken himself to a new battery, I endeavoured to direct her in the use of the Armour of God, for the repelling of his darts thrown from hence, by offering to her consideration,

1. *That even Gods dearest children have often wanted these influences of the Spirit*: What else made *David* cry out, When wilt thou comfort me? and *restore unto me the joy of thy salvation*. What else made the Spouse *Cant.* 3 1. at such a loss for him *whom her soul loved?* What else caused those sad complaints of the Psalmist? *Psal.* 77.

"To this she replied, That it was true; "but surely if she indeed had any interest in "God, he would not hide himself from one "so pressed with afflictions as she was. God "indeed might thus try his children, in health "and at liberty; but would a tender Father "so hide himself from so distressed and a

" dying child. This was hard to imagine of " God who is *Love*.

I replied to this purpose, That sensible consolations were not the necessaries of salvation. 2. That the love of God to his children, is far more seen in giving the soul necessaries, than accommodating it with superfluities. 3. That God is no where in Scripture tyed by his promise to Saints, for the comforts of assurance to be given them in at this or that hour. 4. That it is a very great mistake in Christians, to judge they want the manifestations of the Spirit, because they want these consolatory reflections; for the Spirit manifesteth it self in the soul, as well by the influences of *strengthening* and *quickening*, as comforting grace, and the witnessings of it. That *David* was become *like a bottle in the smoke, that his eyes failed for Gods Word*, saying, *When wilt thou comfort me?* Psal. 119. 82, 83. yet he was at that time Gods child; yea, *the man according to his heart*. That *Job* also (as might be gathered from several passages in his Book) often wanted these sensible manifestations; at last I commended a Sermon upon that subj & to her; after the reading of which, her Spirit was more composed, and she satisfied, that if she could but find the strengthening and quickening influences of divine grace, she had no reason for want of sensible consolations to conclude against her self.

3 *Tempt.* Satan perceiving this fiery dart well nigh quenched, betakes him again to his quiver for another arrow: his next *device* was to perſwade her that ſhe wanted alſo *the ſtrengthening grace of God*; ſoon after I heard her ſpeaking to this ſenſe;

"'Tis true (Sir) *if I could but find the* "*grace of God ſtrengthening me unto duty,* "*againſt ſin, I think I ought not to caſt away* "*my hope, though I do want aſſurance; that* "*I am my Beloveds, and my Beloved mine;* "*but alas I want this! Sir, I am now at ſuch* "*a paſs, I cannot pray, &c. God hath laid* "*his hand upon my mouth, and I cannot open it,* "*ſo much as to ſay unto him, Abba Father.*

Obſerving the ſubtilty of this crafty adverſary, to perſwade her from ſome partial weakneſſes, and thoſe alſo much occaſioned from bodily diſtempers, that ſhe wholly wanted the workings of the Spirit of Grace; I accordingly applied my ſelf to her.

She tells me, it was true, ſhe had learned from the Apoſtle, *Rom.* 8. 11. *That if ſhe had the Spirit of Chriſt, ſhe was his*; which way ſoever the Spirit (as the author of ſpecial and diſtinguiſhing grace) pleaſed to work in her; and ſhe did believe, *That if the Spirit of him who raiſed up Jeſus from the dead, dwelt in her; he that raiſed up Chriſt from the dead, ſhould alſo one day quicken her mortal body, by his Spirit dwelling in her.* But, Sir, ſaid ſhe. *this ſpirit* is a ſpirit of *ſupplication, a ſpirit of adoption,*

Rom. 8. 11. 15. Gal. 4 6. Rom. 8. 26.

adoption, teaching to cry *Abba Father*, a *spirit helping our infirmities in prayer*. To which I replied,

1. That this was no more than the lot of Gods children: *Asaph* (or whoever was the author of that 77 *Psalm*) complained that *he* Psal. 77. 4. *was so troubled he could not speak*.

2. *That the Lord had silenced her Ladiships tongue*, by his own hand laid upon it, in a continual course of afflictions. Now, though God indeed requires of us the homage of our lips; *Let me hear thy voice* (saith Christ to his Spouse, *Cant.* 2. 14.) *for it is comely*. And *Take unto you words, and say*, (saith the Prophet) yet he doth not expect this homage, where, by his providence, he discharged our tongues of it.

3. That there is a *praying without the* Psa. 102. 5. *voice*, which also the Lord heareth. *Groaning* Psal. 6. 8. *hath a voice*, Psal. 102. 5. and *weeping* a voice, *Psal.* 6. 8. *Hezekiah chattered like a Crane*, yet the Lord heard him. In short, I besought her Ladiship to consider, that the business of prayer was in Scripture expressed by *wrestling with God*, by *lifting up the eyes, hands, heart* unto him; by *pouring out* of the *soul* before him; all which might be without the use 1 Sam. 1. of words. Thus *Hannah* prayed, and was answered; yet *spake not a word*: And I doubted not but her *Ladiship* thus could and did pray.

4. Finally, I desired her *Ladiship* to observe Gal. 4. 6. that in *Gal.* 4. 6. God is said to send his *Spirit*

Spirit into our hearts, teaching us to cry Abba Father. And *Rom.* 8. 26. that *the Spirit helpeth our infirmities with strong cryes and groans, which could not be uttered.* Now *groans* (at least) are the language of the hearts. There is indeed another assistance of the holy Spirit, teaching us *what to pray for*; but this floweth not from the Spirit, in a *way of special grace*; but as it is the author of *spiritual gifts*, which those might have who had no true interest in God, nor had received the Spirit of Christ, as a spirit of Sanctification. With these, and such like considerations, I endeavoured to satisfie her *Ladiship*, who yet could hardly be satisfied, because she could not pay so full and perfect an homage to God, as formerly she had done; but her unweariable adversary again reneweth his assault. The next news which I heard was this: Rom.8.25.

4 *Tempt.* "*Sir, I have seriously thought upon what you told me, and am convinced, that though I spake never a word, yet if I could keep my heart lifted up to God, if I could wrestle with him with my Spirit, this were acceptable prayer; but (whatever you may think,) I cannot do this: When at any time I compose my self to prayer, I am tortured with pain, that I cannot do it; at other times through drowsiness I fall asleep, &c.*

By this time her Ladiships tormenting distemperatures prevailed upon her to a great degree,

degree, so as night and day she had little rest, beyond the influence of *Anodines* stupifying her sense. As soon as she had taken these, she used to compose her self to secret prayer, by and by the operation of the medicine overtook her, and inforced sleep: when the operation of the *Anodine* ceased, her pains returned, and she awoke, and then, whenever she composed her self to it, her pains disturbed her; only this she added to her complaint (to find out any cause of which for a while posed me.)

"*That although at first when she composed* "*her self to look up to God, she found not much* "*pain; yet when she was entered once into her* "*duty, she was sure to be racked with the in-* "*crease of her pain.*

I know that the Devil is but a small friend to our communion with God, and would in what he could hinder it: I also knew he had a natural power (God permitting the exercise of it) by which he could disturb bodily humours, and divert them to an affected part; but not willing to impute it to a preternatural cause (unless quite at loss) upon further deliberation, I conceived there might be this natural cause of it.

This good Lady desired when she served the Lord, to serve him with her spirit; and when she addressed her self to God, summoned up all her spirits to do it with the more intention of mind, and fervour of spirit: Now this I conceived might be a natural cause of the increase

increaſe of her pain at ſuch a time, in regard that her ſpirits, which were wont to ſerve her body in the ſupportation of her under her affliction, were at this time drawn up to another imployment; and the ſeveral parts of her body at preſent left deſtitute, it might give a natural advantage to her infirmity; but this was but my particular fancy. I told her,

1. That ſhort ejaculations were moſt ſuitable to her preſent condition, and were heard of God, as well as longer prayers; for we are not heard for our much ſpeaking.

2. I minded her of a ſpeech of Mr. *Rutherfords*; *If I were in health, I would deſire but to caſt one long look toward Heaven.*

3. I told her, *it was unreaſonable for her Ladiſhip to conclude her ſelf to want the ſtrengthening influences of the holy Spirit, becauſe as to this or that act of duty, poſſibly ſhe might not diſcern ſuch an influence of it.* It was likely that if her Ladiſhip examined as to many other duties ſhe might find it, and that with an evidence not to be denied.

4. I further told her, the influence of the ſpirit was moſt eminently ſeen in its workings, in ſtrengthening the ſoul to thoſe exerciſes of grace, which are moſt proper for our day; the preſent condition and diſpenſation I meant, under which we are; and that *Faith* and *Patience* were thoſe graces, the exerciſe whereof God more peculiarly requires of his children in a day of affliction; and if her Ladiſhip found the Spirit of God infuſing, or exerting

exerting these habits, she need not doubt of the strengthening influences of the Spirit: With these things her Ladiship for a while seemed satisfied, but her distempers still increased; and during the violence of them, put her into a great disorder: *Satan* still followed his game, and soon after she tells me;

5 *Tempt.* "Ah (Sir!) you told me that "*Faith* and *Patience* are those graces, the exercise of which is most proper to my condition; and if I found the holy Spirit infusing, or strengthening me to the exercise "of these habits, I might be assured that I was "not without the strengthening influences of "the Spirit; though I did not find such an "assistance as I desired to every particular duty. But Sir, you see, I am very impatient, "restless in my self, froward with every body "about me; I cannot be silent under the "hand of God, nor keep my self from roaring, &c. And for *Faith* (Sir) you know "I have told you I have no assurance, sometimes indeed I have had what I judged a "flash of the light of Gods countenance: "Once I remember, after you had been praying with me, and in your prayer mentioned and pleaded many promises: it pleased "God (as I thought) to seal some of them "to my soul, and at some other times, that "first word which God was pleased to seal "unto my soul, 1 *Col.* 27. *Christ in you the* "*hope of Glory*, hath been returned to my "soul, and comforted me, but I cannot call

"this

"this assurance; doubting quickly returned, "and now Satan would have me let go also "my hold on Christ, but I am resolved not "to let it go until I die; shall I not so re- "solve? I beseech you *Sir*, tell me, should I "not so resolve?

To this I replied;

1. That I rejoyced to hear her Ladiship acknowledging, that God had sometimes sealed promises unto her soul; that those impressions did not abide constant, was not to be wondred at, it being rarely the lot of any child of God to walk in the constant light of his countenance: but I humbly conceived her Ladiship had great ground to call these impressions of the Spirit of God upon a three-fold account.

1. They were made upon her soul after earnest prayer.

2. They came to one in a dark, sad and afflicted condition, and to an awakened conscience, and to one who had for some time desired to walk close with God; and this after long and patient waiting for God.

3. The return of that word in which the Lord had made her soul first to hope, was a great evidence to me, that the Author of the first, was also the Author of the second impression.

2. I rejoyced more to her Ladiships grant, that her Faith of adherence was strengthened, and so strengthened, as she was resolved not to *let it go until she died*: In which resolution

I humbly

I humbly beſought her Ladiſhip to perſiſt; I intreated her Ladiſhip to conſider, that there are not two better marks of a ſtrong Faith, than

1. *The reſiſtance, and repelling of temptations to doubt.*

2. *The caſting of our ſouls upon God, and adhering to the promiſe, though we want incouragement of ſenſe:* with *Abraham*, to believe *in hope above hope:* This indeed is a ſtrong faith, and gives much glory to God. And indeed I thought I never was a witneſs to the actings of a ſtronger faith, than that of this *noble perſon:* in the midſt of her ſaddeſt torments, of her darkeſt hours, when ſhe was even diſtracted through pain and terrour, ſhe would cry out to all our amazement;

"*It is my ſtrong hold, I will not let it go;*
"*no, I will not let it go; I am reſolved I will*
"*not let it go; let Satan ſuggeſt what he will,*
"*it is my ſtrong hold, I have committed myſelf*
"*unto Chriſt, &c.* Thus ſhe would cry out, bitterly weeping while ſhe ſpake in great Agonies of her ſpirit.

3. As to *Patience*, I deſired her Ladiſhip to conſider, that the grace of patience was not a *Roman fortitude*, carrying one out under an affliction, without any expreſſion of paſſion; this an Heathen might do without any aſſiſtance of diſtinguiſhing grace: and ſome diſtemperatures were ſuch, as the beſt Chriſtians could not ſo bear them: *David* roared, *Job* complained; Chriſt himſelf cryed out

My God, My God. Patience is a sacred influence of grace, by which we are inabled in the hour of affliction, to hope in God whom we see not, and meekly to submit to him under his severer dispensations, without any murmuring, repining, or any frowardness of behaviour. I told her, that although her Ladiship did sometimes roar out, through extremity of pain, and were restless through torments; yet the grace of patience was evidently made manifest in her soul, in her humble owning the Justice of God; kissing his rod; never repining, nor murmuring at his dispensations; only desiring strength to bear what he would please to lay upon her, and her willingness to die or live, as he should please to order (for it was now patience in her to be content to live) finally in her willingness (in obedience to Gods command and ordinances) (though she earnestly desired death) yet to use all means (though she had no hope of cure) to prolong a miserable life so long as God pleased.

4. Finally, I told her, that although possibly sometimes in the height of her distempers, some speeches might sound some impatience and unbelief; when the extremity of her pain had almost totally deprived her of the use of her reason; yet God would not impute this to her; for he weighs our performances with our temptations. So the Apostle saith, *You have heard of the patience of Job:* he that looks in the story will find much

much in *Job*, which we should call *impatience*; he cursed the day of his birth, *chap.* 3. And we find in his story, many other very passionate and distempered speeches; yet the Apostle saith not, you have heard of the passion and frowardness; but *you have heard of the patience of Job.* Though *Job* sometimes were very impatient; yet the Lord considering *Jobs patience*, with his *temptations*, records him as a *patient man*, and so *patient*, as to be propounded to his Saints in following ages, as an example of patience: he saith not, you have heard of the *passion* or *frowardness*; but *you have heard of the patience of Job.* In short, I told her *Ladiship*, that we who were spectators, could not but judge her (in the free use of her reason) full both of faith and patience: for her few distempered hours, as they were not in number equal to the rest; so neither would her tender Father judge her for them.

By these, and other Arguments, through Gods assistance, she seemed at last satisfied, that although she yet wanted the consolations of the Spirit; yet she was not without the strengthening influences of it.

But yet her adversary would not leave her; his next temptation was from her apprehended want of Gods quickening grace; to which purpose she replies again:

6 *Tempt.* "Sir, I remember you told me, "that though I wanted the consolations of "the

,‘ the Spirit; yet if I found its quickening in-
,‘ fluences, I had no reason to despond: but
,‘(Sir) I want these; my head, and my heart
“ is dull; there is no life left in my spirit; I
“ lift up a lifeless soul to God in prayer; never
“ was any in so dull and dead a condition as
“ I am.

To this I replied;

1. That if her Ladiship found the strengthening influences of the holy Spirit, they would evidence a state of justification and favour with God; now those were evident in her Ladiship; how else did her Ladiship in her dark condition, commit her self unto God? rest upon him and patiently wait for him.

2. That as to quickening grace it was seen: 1. In *exciting the soul to duty.* 2. In *inclining the soul in duty*, so as it performeth it with alacrity, delight and vigour; and for the latter, it works in us by assisting us in the improvement of our natural parts and powers: now this assistance might be wanting to her Ladiship, through the indisposition of those Organs, by, and through the means of which the Spirit perfecteth these operations: and her Ladiship must consider, that her *spirits* were tired with succession of pain, and stupified by *anodines* medicines, which her learned Physician thought proper for her for the allevation of her pain, which otherwise would soon have destroyed her: That her dulness was no more to holy duties,

than to any thing else, and (as I conceived) wholly occasioned through these natural causes.

4. Lastly, I told her it was manifest, that God had not wholly withdrawn his quickening grace from her, from her sense of her present distemperature, and the quickening of her soul to the duty; though she did not find such quickening in the duty as she desired, she might truly say, *I sleep, but my heart waketh.* Her heart was awake to a sense of her infirmity; though *she slept* in respect of so full an ability to perform the duty with that *life* and chearfulness which she desired, and had formerly experienced. I further told her, that Gods dearest servants, under sad afflictions, or *partial desertions*, had wanted degrees of quickening grace. How often doth *David* cry out, *Lord quicken me*, Psal. 119. 25, 88, 154, 107. Psal. 143, 11, &c.

It was some time before she could be convinced of this, that it was an evidence of quickening grace, for her soul under its heaviness, to be kept awake with the sense of her duty, and labour under the burthen of its infirmity; but at last she was as to this also in some measure satisfied.

And now her adversary was inforced in a great measure to quit all his strong holds. Some of these temptations returned, but her judgement was established, her faith strengthened, and she was never after kept long in bondage to any of them, for an hour or two,

or for a night; she might be in captivity to some of them; but one might easily discern, from her adversaries shifting from one temptation to another, that his strength was tired and he about to leave her soul.

7 *Tempt.* Yet after this could one have thought, that *her adversary should have offered any suggestion to her, to have destroyed her self.* But as to this temptation (to which her spiritual adversary had a great advantage from the inexpressible torturing pains which she felt) she was not with more advantage, violence, and subtilty moved, than through grace strengthened, in the resisting and repelling of it: she was not wont to parley with her adversary, nor affected to keep his counsels: once and again she was thus solicited. But as God inabled her with indignation, to say, *Get thee behind me Satan*; so he gave her wisdom to discover it to her dearest friends, and he quickly gave over this temptation.

For some time before the Lord translated this servant of his, he had prepared her for her dissolution, by creating in her strong desires to be *dissolved that she might be with Christ.* She was much prone to suspect her own sincerity, and would tell me,

"*That she sometimes feared lest she should*
"*desire death only to be freed from her pain;*
"*but she hoped she did not desire it upon that*
"*account.*

For ſome weeks before ſhe died, ſhe had many *fainting* and *Convulſion* fits; in every one almoſt of which, we expected her change: when ſhe recovered out of any of them, ſhe would be almoſt angry at her ſouls recovery; and uſually her firſt word was, *Muſt I yet live longer?* I remember above ſix months before her death, I being in *Eſſex*, wrote a conſolatory Letter to her Ladiſhip, in which I had this paſſage amongſt others:

Madam! if ever we come in Heaven, poſſibly we have many months or years Journey thither, through this wilderneſs; your Ladiſhip (probably) may be there in twelve months (to that purpoſe) when I returned, her Ladiſhip thankt me for my Letter, and told me, *it much refreſhed her; but ſhe was troubled that I ſhould think ſhe had yet twelve months Journey to Heaven*; ſhe chearfully told me, *ſhe hoped ſhe had a ſhorter voyage.*

When the adverſary of her ſalvation perceived he could not baffle her hope, nor make the hand of her faith to ſhake; but ſtill ſhe was reſolved to keep her hold on Chriſt, and that her ſoul was willing, yea deſirous to be diſſolved and to be with Chriſh.

8 *Tempt. He once more attempts to ſpoil her comfort, and moleſts her with extreme fears of a bitter death; and that her faith would then fail, and her courage abate.* This (I think) was his laſt aſſault diſcerned by us, her Ladiſhip

Ladiſhip was pleaſed to impart her fears to me: I humbly beſought her *Honour*, that now ſhe had prevailed againſt Satans *horſemen*; ſhe would not ſuffer her ſelf to be trampled by his footmen. I told her Ladiſhip,

1. *That it was probable that God would give her whom he had made a combatant with ſo long, and ſharp an affliction at laſt to depart in peace.*

2. That it was not probab'e, that her dying pangs would be more ſharp and violent, than what ſhe had already indured, and was yet induring.

3. That ſhe had no reaſon to diſtruſt that God who had ſtrengthened her in ſo many hours and nights, and daies of torturing pain, for his aſſiſtance in the laſt hour, which if it had more of weight and bitterneſs, yet would have leſs in length.

4. That he in whom ſhe had truſted, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt had taken away the bitterneſs of death, and payed a price for his Saints perſeverance in it; ſo that never any held out to the end, who at laſt was left, and failed in it.

5. I deſired her *Ladiſhip* to digeſt that text, *Heb.* 2. 14, 15. *For as much as the children were partakers of fleſh and blood, he alſo took part with them of the ſame, that through death he might deſtroy him that had the power of death, even the Devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their life-time ſubject to bondage.*

Soon after this her distemperature yet heightened, her pains grew exceeding great, and so continued for some daies, till about 4 daies before her death, which yet it pleased God to inable her to endure with an admirable patience, still she kept *her hold fast in God*, professing to me even in her highest fits of distemper, that *the Lord was her hope; and she had an hold on him, and would not let it go, let God do what he pleased with her, and Satan suggest what he could unto her.*

Some four daies before her death, it pleased God that her pains were in some degrees abated; and now by this experience of Gods supportation of her in her last sad return of pain, she grew confident that she should be able to stand in the hour of death.

The day before she died, was to her a day of great reviving; she had not (of many weeks before) been so chearful and free from pain.

At noon coming in (as I was wont) to pray with her, I found her even ravished with the apprehensions of Gods goodness to her, giving her some relaxation from pain: and I hope I shall not forget how earnest she was in pressing me to praise the Lord with her, and for her.

After prayer she continued very chearful; yet on the sudden she laid hold on my hand, and drew me to her, so as I perceived she would whisper something in my ear. I a little admired at her sudden joy, and what

she

she had to say, inclining my head to her: when she perceived her *noble Sister* had turned her back, and was with the rest of the company out of hearing, she tells me, *I think I may tell it you, you will not speak of it, I believe I am very near my Fathers house.*

I resolved to keep her counsel, till I saw the issue, and the rather because she seemed to us further from death, than at any time for some weeks before: in this temper she continued the remaining part of that day: it was the day when I was to preach my weekly Lecture; so that I returned not to her until the evening; when I found her as before, very chearful, and able to discourse with me about a private business, as to which on the behalf of her friend, she had improved her interest in a worthy *Gentleman*; she had that night received a Letter from him, letting her know it was dispatched, and took her leave of me, desiring me to draw up a Letter of thanks to him, which she would (as she told me) the next day subscribe, that it might be sent by the next Post.

But it so pleased God, that by an inexpected turn of Providence, before morning her spirits failed her, and she in a great measure lost her speech, and after spake very few words, only made signs to us to pray for her: Once she said, *I fear*, and by and by, *I hope*, *I hope*; and so quietly, without suffering any pain (so far as we could discern) she yielded up her soul to God upon the 25th.

day of *March*, 1652. about nine of the clock.

Thus she *fought the good fight*, *and kept the faith*, and hath now put on *the Crown of Glory*, being entred into the actual possession, and beatifical vision, of those things which *eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive; even the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*

She was buried at *Blicklin*, in the County of *Norfolk*, *March* 27. 1652.

With this *Epitaph* upon her grave-stone.

Here lyes one nobly born, once blest
With all the Riches of the East;
Then stript of all, and in the place;
Receiv'd of God riches of grace:
These made her covetous to see,
The Mine whence came such Treasury:
Her soul for haste there to appear
Clogg'd with the body, dropt it here
Engaging to it, in the morn
Of th' Resurrection to return,
And reassume its Union.
Reader! weigh this, and then pass on.

A Postscript.

THese Notes, with this memorial of this excellent *Lady*, were within some few months after her death drawn up, and several

several Copies transcribed, and presented to her noble relations; the same for substance (Reader) as thou hast them here, though they may be a little altered as to some *words* or *phrases*. Nor had I any thoughts of makeing them publick till *Anno* 1664. God taking away her noble *Sister* (whom I had the *honour* eighteen years to wait upon) I thought it my duty to raise her up a monument according to my ability (though her *honourable* name needed no such little advantage as this.) Having taken up this resolution, I resolved also to joyn these notes with them, and accordingly sent them to a Stationer, in whose hands they were *Anno* 1665. when the Plague hindered the printing of them; and *Anno* 1666. till the *Dreadful Fire* consumed them. I was for some times after divided in my thoughts, whether to revive them or no; but at last finding (accidentally) amongst my notes, an imperfect Copy of them; I set to the work, and through Gods assistance, have once more brought it to an issue; and I cannot but in it something consider the Providence of God retarding my hand to an opportunity of doing a piece of service to the last mentioned *Lady*, which I never thought her *honourable* name for Religion would have stood in need of.

Within these six months last past (to justifie if it were possible, the tremendous Apostacy of another) I hear it commonly reported amongst the *Papists*, that both this *noble*

Lady

Lady and *her Husband* died *Papists*, and that her only Son is also one.

For Mr. *Courten*, he was wholly unknown to me; I never saw his face; it was his unhappiness to die in a *Popish Country*, which might give an advantage to such a fiction. But his Son, *William Courten*, Esquire, yet living, is a sufficient testimony against this fabulous report, who both visited the place since his Fathers death, and received the testimony from a friend, which his dying Father left of his *perseverance in the communion of the Protestant Church*, and abhorrence of the *visits* and *superstitious vanities* with which those *Votaries* use to trouble *dying persons*: as also had a real testimony from the *unhallowed burying place* which alone the Papists would allow him. This, and much more, I have had from his worthy Son, which I have forgot, as not thinking I should ever have had any cause of such a repetition. But that worthy *Gentleman* yet lives; and if any be unsatisfied, and will take the pains to inquire of him, he can satisfie them both that his *Father* died no *Papist*, and that *himself is none* (according to another part of their fabulous report, who are pleased in making lyes their refuge) he hath seen too much of the exceeding fondness, the folly, and *superstitious vanities* of that *Pageantry* in Religion, to be ever *proselited* to it, and is I think satisfied that it is justly to be abhorred by a sober person, were it only for the little influence it hath

hath upon the lives of those where it is most practised, and the dispensation it gives to all manner of *Luxury*. But he is of age and abilities sufficient to speak for himself.

For this *Excellent Lady*; none living is a more competent witness than my self, who had the opportunities of daily converse with her, till the moment of her dissolution; nor can there be a better testimony, than these Papers, containing the substance of her discourses with me to her very last gasp: They understand little of the *Popish Faith*, that upon the reading of these discourses, will not conclude, that her Ladiship was at a sufficient distance from it; and that these were not discouirses formed for such a design as her *Vindication*. There are four or five *Honourable Persons* in *England*, her near relations, can testifie, who have had these notes fourteen years at least, if not fifteen or sixteen by them; the same, as to the substance of them, though possibly (as I said before) some phrases may be altered upon more mature deliberation. These discourses do not sound like the language of one who believed the Doctrines of *Popery* about *remission of sins*, *assurance*, *merit*, *prayers to Saints and Angels*, *&c.*

But indeed a person is not ordinarily to be found, upon whom that tribe could with more disadvantage fasten such an imputation, than upon this *Excellent Lady*. Who so wisely casts their eye upon those who in this noon-

noon-day of the Gospel, are in *Protestant* Countries, proselyted to that kind of devotion; will find that their temptation to it hath been advantaged.

1. From some *carnal conceits of God*, and *his Worship*, thinking him such a one as themselves, to be pleased with *musick*, and gay pompous shews of devotion; or at least some *Jewish conceits* for the continuance of what the Apostle calls, *worldly Ordinances*, and a *carnal Sanctuary*; not regarding that God is a *Spirit*, and under the Gospel to be worshipped *in spirit and in truth*; but pleasing themselves with what the Apostle calls *the rudiments of the world*, and such Ordinances as *touch not, taste not, handle not, which are things perishing with the using after the commandments, and Doctrines of men, which things indeed have a shew of wisdom, in will-worship and humility, and neglecting of the body, not in any honour to the satisfying of the flesh.* Some such temptation as this might easily help to *Proselite*, a *Vane*, a *Crashaw*, a *Nonnanton*, &c.

Col. 2. 20, 21, 22, 23.

2. Or else secondly, an *ignorance in the things of God*. *Ignorance* we know is *avowed the Mother of their devotion for Laicks*: and indeed an ignorant soul, as to devotion, is *White-Paper*, upon which a *Mahumetan*, or a *Papist* may write any thing: And of *knowing persons*, we rarely find any proselited, unless some rare persons whom the Lord picks out to make examples of *his vengeance*, who (as the Apostle speaks, 2 *Thes.* 2. 10, 11, 12.) Having

2 Thes. 2. 10, 11, 12.

received

received the truth, and *not the love of the truth that they might be saved.* God gives up to *strong delusions, that they should believe a lye: That they all be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.*

3. Or else *Thirdly*, They are such persons, who are tempted to it, from their *dependancies* (as servants to their Masters or Mistresses) or *Relations*: the *Wife* to please her *Husband*, or an *Husband* to *humour his Wife*; or from their hopes to gain such *relations* and *carnal advantages*, as their *necessities*, or *covetousness*, or *ambition* betrayes them to thirst after, and purchase, though at the price of their immortal souls.

4. Or *Lastly*, Such, for whose *loose* and *wanton feet*, *the waies of the Gospel are too strait*: They must have more sensual pleasure than a Gospel Rule will allow them, and are not able to endure the rebukes of a conscience smiting them for such vanities, and fain would have a *pardon* at a cheaper rate, than the Gospel will afford it; and that with a license to sin again, and be upon the same terms of peace again, upon the slight terms of a little *mony*, or an auricular confession, or a slight penance, or a *short Pilgrimage*, &c. Those who wisly cast their eyes upon those few Proselites which the *Papists* have in *England* will find, that some, or more of these things have been and are their temptations.

Now, who so knew this eminent *Lady*, knew her far enough from the impressions of such

such temptations. No person lived a more severe and strict conversation; nor was more fearful of deceiving her self with false hopes; nor wary in giving her self grounds of hope as to the remission of sins, and the favour of God. No person living was more an enemy to a pompous, vain Pageantry in the Worship of God; nor more affected to a *simplicity, plainness*, and *spirituality in her devotions*: she was an exceeding knowing, judicious person in the ways of God, and one who truly received the truth in a most ardent love of it; nor had she any temptation from any dependancy or relation, from any carnal enjoyment, or hope of any. Her fear for her dear Husband, left the temptation of the place where he was, (which was *Italy*) should have any influence on him as to Religion, was a great affliction to her; her joy as much, when by Letters received from him, she understood his constancy: she was earnest with every Christian that came near her, to beg of God to keep him in that Country from the Idolatries and superstitions of it. Her acquaintance and delight was not only in and with Protestant Ministers; but with those of them, whose principles were at greatest distance from anything of Popery. I dare say, that in the two last years of her life, she never saw the face of a *Popish Priest*. All which things considered, I leave it to an indifferent *Reader* to *determine*, with what *disadvantage* to their own *honour* and *reputation*, as well as *impudence*, a

to matter of *justice* and *common honesty* towards a *noble person*, who hath now these *sixteen years* been in Heaven, any persons evulge such impudent slanders; but their boldness to rake in the ashes of a person dead, is the more evident, from the imputation with which they are not ashamed to brand the only *male-branch* of this excellent root, who (blessed be God) yet lives, and that not only rooted in the *Protestant Faith*, but able to *justifie* it against such as oppose it.

FINIS.

FINIS.